

STARS AND STRIPES®

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**Patrolling
Haifa Street
with the 1-9 Cav**

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PHOTOS BY LISA BURGESS/Stars and Stripes

Left: Soldiers from Company C, 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment take part in Sunday's foot patrol mission in the Haifa Street area of Baghdad. Above: Cpl. Alan Gonzales, a medic for Company C's 3rd Platoon, scans for danger in a Bradley fighting vehicle Sunday near Talil Square in Baghdad.

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

World

Turkey reforms: Turkey's main opposition party petitioned parliament Tuesday to convene an emergency session to meet a key European Union demand and quickly pass a penal code reform package that was withdrawn after the government demanded it include a measure to criminalize adultery.

The opposition Republican People's Party submitted a formal petition demanding that the speaker of parliament convene an emergency session on Sept. 28. Parliament Speaker Bulent Arinc now has seven days to respond. Arinc's Justice and Development Party has an absolute majority in parliament and Arinc could refuse the request to convene the session.

Thatcher's son arrested: Sir Mark Thatcher has managed to postpone being questioned under oath about his alleged involvement in a failed coup in Equatorial Guinea, his lawyers said Tuesday.

The son of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had been subpoenaed to appear in the Wynberg magistrates court Wednesday after the government granted an Equatorial Guinea request to question him about allegations he financed part of the coup attempt.

Thatcher was arrested in Cape Town on Aug. 25 for allegedly contravening sections of the Foreign Military Assistance Act.

Lindh murderer: The convicted killer of Swedish Minister Anna Lindh has renounced his Swedish citizenship and now has only Serbia-Montenegro citizenship, the Migration Board said Tuesday.

Migajlo Mijailovic, 25, is the Swedish-born son of parents who emigrated from the former Yugoslavia in the 1970s.

He fatally stabbed Lindh on Sept. 10, 2003, as she shopped unguarded in a downtown department store.

He is in a hospital psychiatric ward where he likely will remain until the Supreme Court hears an appeal on whether he should receive psychiatric care or spend his life sentence in prison.

Russian navy: The Russian nuclear submarine Vepri, the first such vessel ever to visit a foreign port, docked here on Tuesday with a Russian destroyer.

The Vepri and the Admiral Chabanenko came from exercises in the Atlantic with French navy ships, French authorities said. The Russian vessels will spend the week at the military harbor in Brest, a port on the French Atlantic coast.

Although Russian diesel submarines have paid calls abroad before, the Vepri is the first nuclear submarine to visit a foreign port, he said.

Asia avian flu: A senior Muslim cleric ruled Tuesday that culling chickens to clear land of birds with poison gas is tantamount to an outbreak of potentially deadly avian influenza does not violate Islamic principles.

Veterinary authorities in the northern state of Kelantan, which is under quarantine to stop bird flu from spreading, said they would cull mouth Hasbulah Mohammad Hassan's opinion in a pamphlet. Malaysia for the past month has been grappling with an outbreak of the deadly H5N1 strain of bird flu, which has killed 28 people in Thailand and Vietnam.

Last Friday, a preacher at a mosque denounced the culling of nearly 6,000 birds as cruel and un-Islamic.

Russia anti-terror measures: Russia's upper house of parliament has set priorities for new anti-terror measures including stricter penalties for people who aid terrorists and for officials whose negligence helps terrorist attacks, officials said Tuesday.

The Kremlin-controlled Federation Council is expected to meet on Sept. 29 to consider draft anti-terror legislation, which comes



Middle East unrest: Palestinian mourners carry the coffins of Hamas militants Rabah Zakout and Nabil el Saedi during their funeral in the Gaza Strip on Tuesday. Thousands of Palestinians joined the funeral procession for the two Hamas militants killed by an Israeli airstrike Monday. Dozens of armed militants hoisted Palestinian and Hamas flags and chanted angry slogans calling for revenge. Israel's military said an Israeli helicopter fired a missile at the men's car late Monday as they were on their way to fire rockets at Israeli targets. The strike came a day after a similar Israeli attack killed another Hamas militant.

in response to a series of dramatic attacks in Russia that have killed more than 430 people in the past month.

Viktor Ozerov, the head of the council's defense and security affairs committee, said that about 40 anti-terrorism bills are currently in the works.

Some call for the reintroduction of the death penalty for terror attacks. Russia has maintained a moratorium on executions since 1996, an obligation it assumed upon joining the Council of Europe.

Business

Enron trial: A jury of nine women and seven men was picked Tuesday to decide the outcome of the first criminal trial involving former Enron Corp. executives and a handful of their Wall Street bankers, nearly three years after the company crashed in scandal.

Two former midlevel Enron officials and four former Merrill Lynch & Co. executives are facing charges related to an alleged sham sale of electricity-producing barges off the coast of Nigeria to the brokerage in late December 1999 to help the energy company appear to have met earnings targets.

Jurors, four of whom are alternates, were to hear opening statements from attorneys later Tuesday. They were selected from an initial pool of 150 people.

War on terrorism

Japan's Iraq mission: Japan may extend its deployment of troops in southern Iraq if the security situation in the country does not change, a top government official said Tuesday.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda said, however, that the government has made no final decision yet.

"If the situation remains the way it is now, I think it's necessary for Japan to continue to get actively involved," said Hosoda. When asked if an extension was possible, Hosoda said, "Yes."

Some 500 Japanese troops on a non-combat, humanitarian mission in the Iraqi city of Samawah are slated to come home in December this year. Another 500 are based in

neighboring Gulf states providing support.

Nation

FBI actions in Madrid attacks: Four months after the FBI apologized for wrongly arresting a Portland attorney for ties to the March 11 Madrid train bombings, a federal judge on Monday unsealed a document that prosecutors say lends support to the government's decision to keep Brandon Mayfield detained for two weeks.

The document details evidence gathered after Mayfield's arrest, including that his computer had been used to view Web sites for the Spanish national rail system and to search for plane tickets to Spain, that Mayfield had once taken flight lessons, and that a September 2001 note found at Mayfield's house expressed support for the Taliban.

Agents also found a handwritten note with a phone number in Spain and two firearms.

Martha Stewart case: A federal judge Tuesday ordered Martha Stewart to surrender for prison by Oct. 8, granting a request by the celebrity homemaker to begin serving her sentence for lying about a stock sale.

The judge also recommended that U.S. prison officials assign Stewart to a prison camp in Danbury, Conn., or Coleman, Fla. — the two she requested last week.

U.S. District Judge Miriam Goldman Cedarbaum sentenced Stewart to five months in prison in July, but allowed Stewart to remain out of prison while she appealed her conviction.

Military

Espionage court-martial: Attorneys for an Air Force interpreter facing a court-martial on attempted espionage charges launched a final push Monday to stave off a military trial.

Defense lawyers for Senior Airman Ahmad Al Halabi, 25, argued that the Air Force has failed to make a case against him. Al Halabi is accused of trying to pass off classified documents after a stint at the high-security Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, military base housing prisoners from the war on terrorism.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

Apache exchanges gunfire with Afghan militants, killing six

BY STEPHEN GRAHAM
The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — A U.S. air attack killed six rebels in southern Afghanistan in an exchange of fire after militants shot a rocket at an American helicopter, the U.S. military said Tuesday.

Militants fired a rocket and small arms at a Black Hawk helicopter on Monday in Zabol province, the military said. No American troops were injured and there was no damage to the helicopter before another chopper — an Apache gunship — "engaged the enemy, killing six insurgents," the statement said, without elaborating.

Also Monday, two U.S. soldiers on a routing security patrol were wounded when a homemade bomb destroyed their Humvee in Shinkay, another district of Zabol close to the Pakistani border, the military said. It said the two wounded soldiers would be flown to Germany for treatment but did not identify them or describe their condition.

Two American soldiers were killed Monday in a battle with insurgents in neighboring Paktika

province, part of tract of south and eastern Afghanistan where militants have led a stubborn insurgency since the Taliban were ousted in 2001.

The attacks were the latest evidence militants are stepping up violence ahead of Afghanistan's landmark elections Oct. 9.

The blast that wounded the two soldiers in Shinkay was caused by a freshly laid mine, Zabol Gov. Khial Mohammed said, blaming rebels from the former ruling Taliban for the attack. He said Afghan troops were scouring the area, but had found no suspects.

The military also said three rockets were fired at a U.S. base in Paktika, but landed 50-100 yards away, injuring no one. A roadside bomb attack on a convoy in the eastern city of Jalalabad also caused no injuries, it said. It was not immediately clear when those two incidents took place.

President Hamid Karzai and one of his vice presidents have both escaped attacks in the past week, part of a wave of violence that officials predict will surge ahead of the country's first-ever direct presidential election.

Noor Khan of The Associated Press contributed to this report in Kandahar.

U.S. military examining alleged abuse, death of detainee in Afghanistan

BY STEPHEN GRAHAM
The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — The U.S. military is investigating whether American soldiers abused an Afghan detainee so badly that he died last year at a special forces base in southeastern Afghanistan, an official said Tuesday.

The criminal case, the latest in a string of probes into alleged abuse of prisoners in U.S. jails here, was opened over the weekend following a report that Afghan investigators concluded that the young militiaman may have been murdered.

"We do have an ongoing criminal investigation," said Chris Grey, a spokesman for the Army Criminal Investigation Command at Fort Belvoir, Va. The probe focused on "an alleged death of an Afghan detainee and alleged abuse," he said.

Grey said the military was responding to an account in the Los Angeles Times of how an 18-year-old Afghan named Jamal Naser died after he and seven other militia soldiers were seized by U.S. soldiers in March 2003.

Citing a report by Afghan military prosecutors and witness statements, the newspaper said the men were held for 17 days at the Special Forces base in Gardez, the capital of Paktia province. Survivors said they were beat-

en, hung upside down and struck repeatedly with sticks, rubber hoses and cables, the newspaper reported. Some alleged they were immersed in cold water, made to lie in the snow, or subjected to electric shocks.

It said Naser died on March 16 after complaining of abdominal pains, and that hospital officials and his mother said his corpse showed signs of severe bruising.

Trying to deflect the kind of scandal that followed the abuse of prisoners at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, the current commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan in May ordered a review of their secretive network of about 20 jails at bases across Afghanistan.

The military is to announce on Wednesday when it will release parts of the report, drawn up by a long-serving brigadier general.

Officials have said details including interrogation techniques will remain classified.

After Naser died, the seven other detainees, led by the dead man's brother, a soldier known as Commander Pare, were transferred to Afghan police custody in Gardez where they spent a month and a half before being transferred to Kabul.

There, military officials puzzled by the lack of arrest warrants opened their own investigation eventually released the seven without charge, the Los Angeles Times said.



A U.S. soldier stands guard Tuesday near the site of a car bomb explosion that damaged two U.S. Humvees in Baghdad. Four U.S. soldiers were wounded along with several civilians.

Web site posting claims 2nd American beheaded

The Associated Press

An Islamic Web site posting Tuesday claimed an al-Qaida related group slaughtered a second American hostage in Iraq, an announcement that came as the group's 24-hour deadline for meeting its demands ran out.

"The nation's zealous children shallered the second American hostage ... after the end of the deadline ... We will provide you with film of the slaughter soon, God willing," the statement posted under the pseudonym Abu May-sara al-Iraqi, who has posted past statements on behalf of Tawhid and Jihad, a militant group led by Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Although the brief statement did not identify by name who had been killed, the announcement came a day after graphic footage of the beheading of American construction engineer Eugene Armstrong.

That videotape had threatened to kill another of the three hostages abducted Thursday with Armstrong — either American Jack Hensley or Briton Kenneth Bigley.

The Tuesday night statement said the American had been killed. Relatives of Hensley and Briton Kenneth Bigley appealed for their release hours ahead of a Tuesday deadline set by the Tawhid and Jihad militant group, led by Jordanian terror masteer Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. The group has said it will behead one of the men unless all Muslim women held by the U.S. military in Iraq are freed.

In the nine-minute video, posted Monday on the Internet, a sobbing, blindfolded man identified as Armstrong knelt in front of five militants dressed in black, with a black Tawhid and Jihad banner on the wall behind them.

The man in the center read a statement, then pulled a knife, grabbed the hostage seated at his feet and sliced his head off. The victim screamed and blood poured from his neck.

The Central Intelligence Agency has determined with a "high degree of confidence" that the voice on the tape is that of al-Zarqawi.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Monday, 1,032 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to the Defense Department. Of those, 782 died as a result of hostile action and 250 died of nonhostile causes. The figures include three military civilians.

The British military has reported 65 deaths: Italy, 19; Poland, 13; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, six; Ukraine, eight; Slovakia, three; Thailand, two; the Netherlands, two; and Denmark, Ed Slovakia, Estonia, Hungary and Latvia have reported one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 894 U.S. military members have died — 673 as a result of hostile action and 221 of nonhostile causes, according to the military's numbers Monday.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ Insurgents attacked a U.S. patrol with machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades Monday near Sharqat, killing an American soldier, the military said.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ Marine Lance Cpl. Gregory C. Howman, 28, Charlotte, N.C.; died Wednesday in Anbar province, Iraq; assigned to 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, Calif.

A CIA official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the agency's technical analysis determined that the voice was al-Zarqawi's and that officials were also able to determine that al-Zarqawi beheaded Armstrong.

The speaker on the tape said Tawhid and Jihad was taking revenge for women Iraqi prisoners and called President Bush "a dog."

"You, sister, rejoice. God's soldiers are coming to get you out of your chains and restore your purity by returning you to your mother and father," he said.

The U.S. military says the only two women in its custody in Iraq were female security prisoners: Dr. Ribah Rashid Taha, a scientist who became known as "Dr. Germ" for helping Iraq make weapons out of anthrax, and Huda Salih Mahdi Ammash, a biotech researcher known as "Mrs. Anthrax."

Bush on Tuesday condemned the beheading of Armstrong telling Iraqi Prime Minister

Ayad Allawi, "We will not allow these thugs and terrorists to decide your fate and decide my fate."

Bush met with the Iraqi leader during an annual gathering of the United Nations General Assembly. He said the United States expressed "heartfelt condolences" to Armstrong's family.

"We all stand in solidarity with the [remaining] American that is now being held captive," Bush said.

In Georgia, Pati Hensley, the wife of the 48-year-old Jack Hensley, pleaded Tuesday with his captors to open lines of communication and spare his life.

"I would plead with them to please realize this man does not deserve this fate," Pati Hensley said in an interview with CNN.

Meanwhile, a car bomb struck a U.S. patrol on the road to Baghdad's airport, wounding four American soldiers and several Iraqis.

Also Tuesday, two U.S. Marines were killed in separate attacks west of Baghdad, the U.S. military said.

Patrols turn ugly on Haifa Street

1-9 Cav sees more clashes with enemy

BY LISA BURGESS
Stars and Stripes

BAGHDAD — Until last week, the world knew little about Haifa Street. Then came the spectacular car bombs in front of the Iraqi police station, and suddenly, Haifa was Iraq's newest war zone.

But to the soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment, who must patrol the sector that includes Haifa Street, that area has been an all-out war zone for months.

In fact, soldiers with the 1-9 Cav don't call it Haifa Street. To them, it's "Grenade Alley," or "Purple Heart Boulevard."

In Baghdad, "there are two areas that are highly contested," said Capt. Chris Ford, commander of the 1-9's Company C, "Sadr City and here," in the Haifa area.

"Every time we go out, we expect contact," said Staff Sgt. Jimmie Thomas, a platoon sergeant for Company C, 1/153rd Infantry of the Arkansas National Guard, which is attached to the 1-9 Cav.

"Almost anything you do out there is movement to contact," Thomas said. "Presence patrols,



Capt. Chris Ford, commander of Company C, 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment, tries to discern the direction of a volley of gunfire as he prepares to lead a foot patrol Sunday on Haifa Street in Baghdad.

whatever. You're expecting to get hit."

More than half the company's soldiers have qualified for Purple Hearts, and Thomas knows personally just how "getting hit" feels.

He was on a mission just two weeks ago, which ended in an hours-long firefight, with six of the platoon's soldiers, including Thomas, wounded by grenades. Thomas took shrapnel in the neck and a leg.

A Haifa mission on Sunday afternoon was shorter and less lethal, but not without incident.

Company C was originally directed to conduct a dismounted patrol that would begin in Talili Square (one of the more dangerous areas) in the Haifa sector, Ford said) and end a mile or so away, at the police station where a bomb went off last week.

Just as the convoy was leaving Forward Operating Base Headhunter, Ford got a call to stop everything, unload the troops, and return to the Tactical Operations Center for new instructions.

As it turned out, when he returned to tell his troops to "mount up," the mission had changed. The foot patrol was still a "go," but local Iraqi police forces were working on a "snatch-and-grab" of an insurgent, and the unit's soldiers were needed to assist, if necessary.

Off the convoy went, with most of the Bradleys heading for Talili Square.

All went well for about a minute, until the hatch dropped on the fighting vehicles. The troopers dashed out. They estab-

lished a perimeter, and then began to move down an alley.

No sooner had the patrol gone about 100 meters when "It turned into World War III out there," Ford said.

For the next 90 minutes, "We had contact the majority of the mission," Ford said.

In addition to "direct fire, grenade attacks and all types of harassing (fire) ... we were taking well-trained individuals," he said.

Yet this time, Company C was lucky: No one was hurt.

In fact, on a scale of one to 10, with 10 being the worst possible day, Ford rated Sunday's mission "about a six."

But it hasn't always been such a "good" day for the unit, which has responsibility for most of the patrols on Haifa Street. Some 60 out of the 118 men in his company have qualified for Purple Hearts, Ford said.

And the 1-9 Cav has had three soldiers killed in action since arriving in March, said Maj. Chris DeGarry, the 1-9's executive officer.

Located in central Baghdad, just a few miles from the tightly controlled and patrolled International Zone where U.S. Embassy and other coalition personnel live and work, Haifa Street and



Cpl. Alan Gonzales, a 21-year-old from El Paso, Texas, and medic for Company C's 3rd Platoon, scans for danger Sunday in a Bradley fighting vehicle while waiting for casualties at an evacuation point near Talili Square in Baghdad.

Stripes reporter's close-up of Company C

BY LISA BURGESS
Stars and Stripes

BAGHDAD — As a veteran reporter of many military conflicts, I have never heard, smelled or felt anything like the firefight I witnessed Sunday on Haifa Street.

And I cannot believe that the men of Company C, 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry do this every day.

Before we began the mission, company commander Capt. Chris Ford had some simple instructions for me: stay with him and do whatever he told me to do, when he told me to do it.

We headed out. It was a 10-minute trip in Ford's command Bradley fighting vehicle to our drop-off point.

There was little conversation in the oven of the Bradley, with the engine's roar throbbing over our earplugs.

Suddenly, the Bradley stopped and the rear hatch dropped open.

"Let's do it," someone muttered, and we dismounted into the dusty street.

The smell of raw sewage was strong. Wary, unhappy Iraqis watched us.

For the first minute, all was quiet.

Then, the sound of gunfire.



Burgess



Capt. Chris Ford, commander of Company C, 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment, pauses Sunday as he leads a foot patrol through the Sheikh Marouf neighborhood of Haifa Street in Baghdad. The patrol came under attack, but no one was hurt.

"Every time we go out, we expect contact."

Staff Sgt.

Jimmie Thomas

A platoon sergeant for Company C, 1/153rd Infantry of the Arkansas National Guard, attached to the 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment

SEE STREET ON PAGE 5

SEE CLOSE ON PAGE 5

Street: Danger 24/7

STREET, FROM PAGE 4

its surroundings are a mix: Sunni and Shia Muslims living and working together.

Like many places in Iraq, Haifa Street acts as a dividing line between the "haves" and the "have nots." On one side are the British Embassy, a revered Islamic cemetery and nice homes.

On the other: poverty.

The stench of garbage and untreated sewage permeates the street. Piles of trash are everywhere. Houses and apartments on the poor part of Haifa Street are crumbling, some from the effects of last year's war, but most from neglect.

It's a perfect place for insurgents who need cover from powerful American weapons, because "it's a labyrinth in there," Ford said.

"There are winding alleys all over, no rhyme or reason to the streets, and no clear shots" for anyone trying to fight back — especially with a population of more than 100,000 civilians crammed into the same area.

"It's classic urban warfare," Ford said.

The part of Haifa Street where Sunday's fighting took place has always been poor and problemat-

ic, according to local Iraqis and 1-9 Cav members.

"These are the same people Saddam had problems with, but he used much more brutal tactics than we can to control them," said Capt. Reggie Kornegay, a civil affairs officer with the 478th Civil Affairs Battalion but who is attached to the 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment.

Nevertheless, since the end of the war, it wasn't that bad for coalition troops patrolling Haifa Street, said soldiers from the 1-9 Cav.

"When we first got here, we walked around giving candy to kids and talking to people," said 2nd Lt. Rick Caldwell, a Company C platoon leader. Staff Sgt. Jimmie Thomas, a Company C platoon sergeant, agreed.

"At first it wasn't too bad," said Staff Sgt. Jimmie Thomas, a Company C platoon sergeant. Thomas said his platoon has done "hundreds" of missions to Haifa Street since March.

But two months later, the situation started to change.

Insurgents began to make inroads with local Iraqis by spreading money to poor families, Kornegay said. Suddenly, people were less interested in talking to



Soldiers from Company C patrol Haifa Street on Sunday.

American soldiers. Residents watching passing U.S. convoys stopped smiling and began scowling.

Then, in early May, Kornegay — whom DeGaray praised for his special ability to relate to local Iraqis — and his small team were attacked on the corner of Haifa and a place known simply as Street #17.

In a five-hour fight, Kornegay was wounded in a leg by grenade shrapnel while another soldier was wounded in the stomach.

As the summer wore on, the situation worsened.

By August, 60 percent to 70 percent of his platoon's missions to Haifa Street "were resulting in enemy contact of some sort,"



PHOTOS BY LISA BURGESS/Stars and Stripes

A soldier from Company C, 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment checks to see if it's safe to move out during Sunday's foot patrol mission on Haifa Street in Baghdad.

Thomas said.

But even as patrols continue to turn into firefights, DeGaray said he has faith the situation will turn around, especially as the Iraqi Security Forces improve its abilities.

"The ISF has really come a long way in the five months we've been here," he said Sun-

day. "They have grown in training and experience."

Meanwhile, "We're going to keep the pressure on," Ford said. "We will not give (the insurgents) the opportunity to publicly, openly plan or present themselves."

E-mail Lisa Burgess at: burgessl@stripes.odm



A soldier from Company C, 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment checks to see if it's safe to move out during Sunday's foot patrol mission on Haifa Street in Baghdad.

Close: Soldiers show courage under fire

CLOSE, FROM PAGE 4

I heard the smack of AK-47 fire in the air. It seemed to be coming from several blocks away.

I ran awkwardly after Ford, who was dashing down the street and yelling into his radio.

As it turned out, the fire was "friendly" — Iraqi police forces on a raid.

The patrol continued, but about a block down, we heard an explosion. We all ran for cover, American and Iraqi alike.

As I was running, my left ankle caught the edge of a pile of trash and twisted. I went down hard, into a puddle of muck.

A U.S. soldier promptly turned and, without missing a beat, yanked me back to my feet.

"Are you OK?" He yelled as we kept running.

"Yeah," I yelled back.

In truth, I was pretty messed up, and I still had more than a mile to go with the patrol before we could link up with the casualty evacuation point.

My breath was harsh in my ears, my heart pounding from the pain as I half-hobbled, half-jogged along, camera bouncing against my body armor.

The shooting got closer: Insurgents had realized they could use the Iraqi police fire to cover their own efforts against the American foot patrol.

There was incoming fire and more explosions — possibly grenades, maybe makeshift bombs.

But Company C was used to all this. Each soldier was swapping positions and moving with the precision of a company trained by a choreographer.

It was about to get worse: We had snipers on our hands.

We were near the end of the foot patrol route when I heard a crack.

I knew what that cracking noise meant: When bullets traveling the speed of sound get very close to your head, they sound like fingers snapping.

Three soldiers and I made a

dead run for the evacuation Bradley.

I heard the crack again, then a few hundred feet later, again.

But I made it to the Bradley, and the soldiers continued their mission.

I wasn't afraid — it is my eighth combat deployment since 1994. I've been shot at in Africa, Afghanistan and Kosovo. I was in the Pentagon when an airliner slammed into it on Sept. 11, 2001.

But I was embarrassed that I had fallen, and angry to think I might have jeopardized the patrol by my slowness.

Most of all, I was amazed at the courage and cool of the soldiers who have been doing this every day since March.

"They are competent, they are brave ... they are every adjective I can come up with," Ford later said of his soldiers.

"Maybe history will someday reflect that."

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It was a good day for some baseball in Altun Kupri, Iraq, last week as opening day of a new sports league — with only two teams — began as soldiers from the Hawaii-based 25 Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade stood guard.

Right: Capt. Deron Haight, 37, congratulates winning Team Nawruz, as he shakes hand with Ahmed Jager, 14, an infanter. Team shirts say "Altun Kupri Baseball" in Arabic script. Below: Pitcher Diller Fakhraddin, 16, tosses a fastball.

AP photos



Iraqis go out to the ball game

Soldiers in northern city organize club for Turkomen, Kurdish kids

BY JIM KRANE
The Associated Press

GRAY-SHIRTED BRUSIS filled the bases in the final inning when the potential winning run strode to the plate — Kamanar Sabir, the team's 14-year-old slugger.

Kamanar clenched his teeth. The Nawruz pitcher, Diller Fakhraddin, stared back. Parents in the stands swung their hands and shouted. Diller's fastball whizzed in, and Kamanar barked.

Strike one. Strike two. Then, "Strike three!" yelled the umpire, U.S. Army Capt. Deron Haight. "You're out!"

And what may have been Iraq's first organized baseball game was over, with the red-shirted Nawruz — the Kurdish word for New Year's Day — beating Bruks, or Team Lightning, 10-7.

The teams of 13- to 17-year-old boys are the only two in Altun Kupri's new league, and Wednesday was opening day in this northern Iraqi village.

It was a perfect evening for baseball. Parents crunched pistachios to the ding of aluminum bats. Soldiers from the Hawaii-based 25th Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade stood guard at the soccer field-turned-ball diamond, with a Humvee parked at each outfield foul pole and another sitting just beyond the center field fence.

The youngsters — Kurds, Turkomen and one Arab — belted line drives, scooped up grounders — and booted a few, too. Parents cheered as their boys chased down fly balls and hurled them home, where overzealous runners were tagged out.

In most of Iraq, U.S. soldiers would stand little chance of organizing a baseball league, let alone setting up a public address system and staging a game on a town's soccer field. But Altun Kupri, just south of Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan region, lies in a friendly region. U.S. troops have never been attacked here and consider the town safe enough to trade in their helmets and body armor for T-shirts and ball caps.

Haight, commander of a platoon that occupies a small base in this town 205 miles north of Baghdad,



Team Nawruz pitcher Diller Fakhraddin, center, celebrates a 10-7 victory with teammates. In the rear is the team's coach, Army Sgt. Thomas Jones.

said the soldiers hope America's favorite pastime catches on in Iraq.

"I'd like to see one of them get a scholarship at West Virginia University and then go and play for the Pirates," said Haight, 37, a Pittsburgh fan who hails from Harrisville, W.Va.

It's not an impossible dream. Baseball has thrived in some countries where U.S. troops have deployed, including Cuba, Panama and the Dominican Republic.

The idea for the league arose after Haight's soldiers began playing baseball among themselves. They made a ball from wadded paper wrapped in duct tape. An aluminum cot leg was the bat.

At the same time, the platoon was trying — and failing — to unify Altun Kupri's sports clubs, which are grouped, like the town, into Turkomen and Kurdish camps. So the soldiers started their own sports club and made it a baseball league. In July, Haight persuaded the city council to send over a few dozen kids.

With the final out on opening day, Diller, the winning 16-year-old pitcher, and his teammates poured off the field, their arms in the air, shouting "Nawruz, Nawruz."

Then the window of baseball-inspired magic closed. The soldiers strapped on their body armor, and Humvee engines roared to life.

Alawi: A broken Saddam appealed to him for mercy

BY SARAH EL DEEB

The Associated Press

CAIRO, Egypt — Iraqi interim Prime Minister Ayad Alawi said in an interview published Monday that a broken and depressed Saddam Hussein had appealed to him for mercy, saying his regime had meant no harm during the former dictator's years running the country.

Alawi has discussed a variety of issues in a series of television and print interviews from London that appeared Monday, a day after he met with British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

"Saddam sent me a verbal message asking for mercy," Alawi told the London-based Al-Hayat newspaper. "He said they were working for the general good and they didn't aim to harm."

Alawi said the message was carried by a member of the current government. He didn't say who or when was the message relayed.

"My answer was these are things the court will determine," Alawi was quoted as saying.

Since his capture in December, Saddam has been held in U.S. detention at an undisclosed location awaiting trial on broad charges of killing rivals, gassing Kurds, invading Kuwait and suppressing uprisings. Eleven of Saddam's top lieutenants also face trial.

Alawi said Saddam's cousin, Barzan al-Tikriti, also imprisoned, had sent a similar message in which he tried to exonerate and distance himself from Saddam. "Others did the same," Alawi said.

Alawi said Saddam was "depressed and broken in spirit." When he was escorted to court on July 1 in Baghdad to face charges, "he was shaking noticeably."

"He thought things would run as they did during his times, that is, that they were going to execute him. He was not reassured until he saw the judges and the media and television," Alawi said.

Saddam appeared confident and at times combative during the hearing in video footage of it that was released afterward.

Alawi said he has not yet met Saddam in prison, saying he might do that after the court decision "so as not to have any influence on the trial, which we want to be fair and legal."

In an interview Sunday with ABC's "This Week," Alawi also said that Saddam and his lieutenants would go on trial soon. "Roughly speaking, I think October," he said, adding that the evidence against Saddam was "overwhelming."

The death penalty has been restored in Iraq after it was suspended during the U.S. administration of Iraq. It is not clear if Saddam would be executed if convicted.

Kidnappings halting fuel, cargo deliveries in Iraq

BY JIM KRANE

The Associated Press

KIRKUK, Iraq — Rampant abductions of foreigners working for the U.S. military and its allies in Iraq have slowed cargo and fuel deliveries from Turkey into Iraq, with Turkish truckers refusing to drive south of the northern Iraqi city of Dohuk for the past two weeks, according to U.S. military reports.

Iraqi truckers have taken over deliveries of goods to U.S. bases and other shipments once handled by Turkish drivers, said Army Maj. Bob Peters, the intelligence officer for the 2nd Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division, which controls security in the Kirkuk region.

Three Iraqi Kurdish drivers kidnapped and killed on Sunday were replacing Turkish drivers that once handled the deliveries, Peters said on Monday. The three were abducted near the U.S. Army base at Balad, though it was not clear precisely when they disappeared.

"In the last two weeks we've seen a serious interruption in commercial traffic" flowing south

from Turkey into Iraq, Peters said.

The main U.S. convoy route, the highway from the Turkish border that runs through Mosul and to Baghdad, is the focal point for kidnappings and other insurgent attacks on military supply convoys.

Guerrillas also target the trucks with improvised bombs triggered by kitchen timers, cellular phones or walkie-talkies. Foreigners' kidnappings have often been followed by videotapes of masked abductors displaying the captives, making demands, and in some cases killing the victims. Peters called the tactic a successful "information operation" that was spreading fear among travelers on the main highway, slowing deliveries of fuel to Baghdad and other cities and slowing economic instability.

Kidnapping has been a persistent problem in Iraq since the U.S.-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein. Iraqis often complain that kidnapping of foreign workers in Iraq draws the attention of the international media here, but that criminal gangs abound far more Iraqis, usually for profit.



RICK EMERT/Stars and Stripes

Former military spouse Ilene Stubbs speaks to wives of deployed soldiers Tuesday at Warner Chapel in Bamberg, Germany, offering tips on beating stress and making the soldiers' homecoming go smoothly.

Former military wives speak on experiences, offer hope

BY RICK EMERT
Stars and Stripes

BAMBERG, Germany — Ilene Stubbs told a roomful of deployed soldiers' wives about her husband going off to war, leaving her both pregnant and scared.

Thirteen months later her husband returned, only to deploy 10 months later, leaving Stubbs again, pregnant again. Over a five-year period, Stubbs and her husband, Fred, spent more than

three years separated by war.

Although the war was in Vietnam, and her story took place three decades ago, little has changed in what the wives of deployed servicemembers face today.

Stubbs and Doris Waldrop visited Bamberg on Tuesday as part of a traveling team called Wives of Warriors, offering tips and encouragement to spouses of deployed soldiers. The team visits Schweinfurt on Thursday and

Würzburg on Friday.

Stubbs spoke of her military life experience candidly and with vivid recollection.

"I married a soldier 42 years ago," she said. "I found out he was having an affair — an affair with a pair of black military boots."

Stubbs said she survived deployments by avoiding what she calls "stinkin' thinkin'."

"Stress can lead us to be pessimistic," Stubbs said. "We can't allow stress to rob us and to take over."

After offering such tools as exercise and proper nutrition to eliminate stress, Stubbs spoke about reintegration.

"Sex — the romance of coming home, it's good for about 24 to 48 hours," Stubbs said. "Then reality sets in. Remember, this reunion is a process, not an event."

Communication is key both before and during the reunion process, Stubbs said. She added that spouses should let the soldier know about big changes they may have made in themselves or the home.

"I had been in charge of the finances. I had been in charge of the discipline," she said. "Then Fred wanted to come home and be a part of my great marriage."

"We married military men. They like to know what's coming next."

Waldrop spoke to the women about finding strength through their faith and not giving up.

"In God's kingdom, you are not a failure unless you fail to try," Waldrop said. "You women, of all people, have so much to offer because of what you are going through."

The president of the Protestant Women of the Chapel-Europe, Victoria Robinson, spoke about parenting during a deployment.

Although they had heard much of the information before, the wives said the seminar was encouraging and uplifting, especially coming from women who had gone through the same experiences.

"They have really good insight into what's going on with us," said Brandie Goosey, whose husband is with the 82nd Engineer Battalion. "They have the experience of what we are going through."

"These are things we know, but it is good to be reminded," said Alexandra Davenport, whose husband is with the 1st Battalion, 6th Field Artillery Regiment. "It has been very uplifting."

Stubbs left the women with a thought on getting their lives back to normal when the soldiers return.

"Don't force anything [back into normalcy]," she said. "After this, 'normal' has changed for everyone involved."



Stubbs

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IN THE STATES

Bush defends Iraq invasion in U.N. speech

President asks nations to intensify war on terrorism

By SCOTT LINDLAU

The Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS — President Bush delivered an unapologetic defense of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, telling the United Nations on Tuesday that his decision "helped to deliver the Iraqi people from an outlaw dictator." He appealed to the world community to join together in supporting the new Iraqi interim government.

Bush's speech to the U.N. General Assembly, running just 24 minutes, also included an appeal for intensifying the global war against terrorism and for focusing energies on humanitarian missions, from helping to end the bloody violence in Sudan to combating AIDS in Africa.

Two years after he told the world body that Iraq was a "grave and gathering danger" and challenged delegates to live up to their responsibility, Bush strongly defended his decision to lead a coalition that overthrew Saddam Hussein's regime without the blessings of the U.N. Security Council.

He spoke shortly after U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan opened the 191-nation gathering with a warning that the "rule of law" is at risk around the world. Annan last week asserted that the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq "was illegal" because it lacked such Security Council approval.

In his opening statement, Justice Department attorney Frank Martin said starting in the 1960s the industry spent hundreds of millions of dollars on organizations set up to conceal the growing body of scientific evidence

an implicit criticism of the U.S. treatment of detainees at Abu Ghraib prison near Baghdad.

Bush told a subdued U.N. session that terrorists believe that "suicide and murder are justified ... and they act on their beliefs." He cited recent terror acts, including the school seizure in southern Russia in which 338 people were killed, nearly half of them children.

Bush reached out to the interna-

“A democratic Iraq has ruthless enemies.”

President Bush addressing the U.N.

tional organization to help with the reconstruction of Iraq, noting that the prime minister of Iraq's interim government, Ayad Alawi, was among those attending the session.

"The U.N. and its member nations must respond to Prime Minister Allawi's request and do more to help build an Iraq that is secure, democratic, federal and free," he said. "A democratic Iraq has ruthless enemies," Bush added, asserting that "a terrorist group associated with al-Qaida is now one of the main groups killing the innocent in Iraq today, conducting a campaign of bombings against civilians and the beheadings of bound men."

Six weeks before the Nov. 2

U.S. election, Bush's comments were directed as much to his audience at home as to the assembled U.N. delegates. His Democratic rival, John Kerry, has accused him of "stubborn incompetence" and "colossal failures in judgment" on Iraq policy and of having squandered international good will.

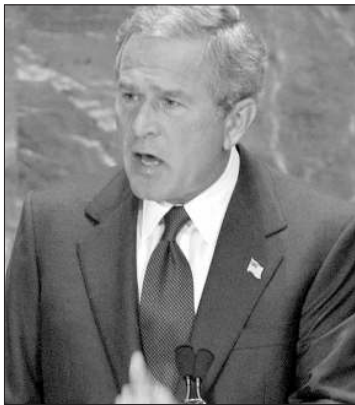
Bush's speech included an appeal for more humanitarian involvement, ranging from helping to end the bloody conflict in Sudan to fighting AIDS in Africa. "AIDS is the greatest health crisis of our time and our unprecedented commitment will bring new hope to those who have walked too long in the shadow of death," he said.

With the casualty toll in Iraq still rising and with a rash of recent suicide attacks, Bush did not dwell on his decision to lead the invasion of Iraq. But he suggested that the Security Council had not followed through after it "promised serious consequences" for Saddam's defiance.

"The commitments we make must have meaning. When we say serious consequences, for the sake of peace there must be serious consequences. And so a coalition of nations enforced the just demands of the world," Bush said.

"My nation is grateful to the soldiers of many nations who have helped to deliver the Iraqi people from an outlaw dictator," he said.

Bush's remarks drew applause only once — at the end of his speech.



During a speech at the United Nations on Tuesday, President Bush called for U.N. nations to dedicate themselves to fighting the war on terror and to aiding Iraq and Afghanistan in establishing democracies.

He also told the gathering he was proposing a "democracy fund" within the United Nations which he said would help countries lay the foundations of democracy by instituting the rule of law, independent courts, a free press, political parties and trade unions. "Money from the fund would also help set up voter precincts and

polling places and support the work of election monitors," he said.

Bush said the United States will make an initial contribution. "I urge all other nations to contribute as well," he said.

Bush's remarks drew applause only once — at the end of his speech.

Government seeks \$280B in new tobacco fraud trial

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The biggest tobacco companies in the United States worked together for decades to mislead the public about the dangers of smoking, a federal lawyer alleged Tuesday at the start of a civil racketeering trial in which the government seeks a record \$280 billion.

In his opening statement, Justice Department attorney Frank Martin said starting in the 1960s the industry spent hundreds of millions of dollars on organizations set up to conceal the growing body of scientific evidence

linking smoking to cancer.

He cited internal industry documents showing company executives knew they were trying to deceive the public.

"The problem ... was that the public might stop smoking because of health concerns," he said.

Industry lawyers have acknowledged tobacco executives may have expressed doubts about public health concerns in the past, but say that doesn't amount to fraud.

"Fraud is, I have a specific intention to mislead you or take



U.S. District Judge Gladys Kessler

money from you by deceiving you," said Philip Morris USA attorney William Ohlemeyer.

U.S. District Judge Gladys Kessler is hearing the case.

Senate panel OKs Goss nomination

WASHINGTON — A Senate panel on Tuesday approved the nomination of Rep. Porter Goss, R-Fla., to head the CIA, overcoming Democrats' objections that Goss was too political for the job.

In a closed meeting, the Senate Intelligence Committee voted 12 to 4, with three Democrats joining the committee's nine Republicans in approving the nomination and one Democrat making no recommendation. Goss' nomination could go before the full Republican-led Senate as early as this week.

From The Associated Press

CBS to name panel to study memos flap

By DAVID BAUDER

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Within the next few days, CBS News expects to name an independent panel of experts to scrutinize its reporting of President Bush's National Guard service after its defenses for airing the explosive story crumbled.

Eleven days after questions surfaced about Dan Rather's "60 Minutes" report, the network apologized Monday and said it could not vouch for the authenticity of documents impugning the president's Guard service.

"I want to say, personally and directly, I'm sorry," a subdued Rather said Monday on the "CBS Evening News."

Now CBS opens its doors to an outside panel that will assign blame.

"I think it will be helpful, given the attention this story has received, for cool, collected, independent voices of unchallenged integrity to examine the process," CBS News President Andrew Heyward said.

See related story on Page 10

The White House said the affair raises questions about the connection between CBS's source, retired Texas National Guard member Bill Burkett, and the Kerry campaign.

Kerry adviser Joe Lockhart said he had spoken to Burkett at the request of Mary Mapes, producer of the story. But Lockhart said he did not recall speaking about the National Guard to Burkett, and ended the call after talking a few minutes of campaign advice.

Burkett, who did not respond to requests for comment from The Associated Press, told USA Today that he had agreed to turn over the documents to CBS if the network would help arrange a conversation with the Kerry campaign. CBS admitted giving Burkett's number to the campaign, but said it was not part of any deal.

Ill. Capitol shooting suspect

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — A man suspected of fatally shooting an unarmed guard at the state Capitol was arrested Tuesday morning as he knocked on doors in a residential neighborhood, police said.

Authorities had been searching for Derek W. Potts since Monday afternoon, when they allege he marched into the state Capitol and shot 51-year-old William Wozniak in the chest, then stowed his gun in his car trunk and drove away.

American Indian museum opens on National Mall

BY FREDERIC J. FROMMER
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A colorful Native Nations procession heralded the opening Tuesday of the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of the American Indian, the newest addition to the historical treasure-trove dotting the National Mall.

A group of five White Mountain Apache Indians from White River, Ariz., drew a crowd with their exotic dress. Four had their chests painted black with white lettering while the fifth was painted white with black lettering. Pine needles were wrapped around their arms and waists, and wooden headgear reached two feet above their heads, which were covered in masks. As they danced, metal balls around their shoulders added to the sounds of an accompanying drummer.

Nearby, Aztec Indians from San Francisco danced with headdresses that reached as high as 6 feet above their heads.

Crowds gathered in crisp weather under a brilliant sun to witness the spectacle in advance

of an opening ceremony featuring speeches by Sens. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, R-Colo., and Daniel Inouye, D-Hawaii, Peruvian President Alejandro Toledo Manrique and others.

In the afternoon, the museum was to open to the public, and musicians, dancers and storytellers were to begin the First Americans Festival, which will last the rest of the week.

Deanne Ives, vice chairman of the Port Skilakam Gamble Tribe near Kingston, Wash., said she took her 14-year-old daughter out of school to attend the ceremony. "I thought it was important to share this historic moment," said Ives, wearing a black and red shawl embroidered with the tribe's logo, a killer whale. "This is a time she'll remember for the rest of her life."

On Monday, hundreds of people already were milling about the museum to get an early peek. "At last we're getting some kind of recognition as Indian people," said Lawrence Orcutt, from the Yurok tribe in northern California.

Dave Anderson, who heads the



San Francisco area Aztecs dance on the National Mall to dedicate the National Museum of the American Indian on Tuesday.

Bureau of Indian Affairs, said the museum will allow Indians to open a new chapter in the United States.

Built at a cost of \$214 million, the sweeping lines represent a communion with nature as the country's tribal peoples did. It houses 8,000 objects from across the Western Hemisphere. Four million visitors a year are expected for the museum's movies and music; paintings, photographs and sculptures; masks, weapons and animals; jewelry and medals; even food and plants.

Air passenger ID rules tested in federal court

BY DAVID KRAVETS
The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — The Justice Department refuses to confirm or deny whether federal rules exist requiring people to show ID before boarding an airplane, according to documents filed with a federal appeals court. The Bush administration told the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that air-travel security initiatives are a matter of national security, and should not be available for public inspection.

John Gilmore, a Libertarian who made millions as a founding employee of Sun Microsystems, sued the government and the airlines, alleging among other things that the identification requirement violates his right to freely assemble.

In 2002, Southwest Airlines employees at Oakland International Airport barred Gilmore from boarding a flight to Baltimore after he refused to produce government-issued photo identification.

He also refused to allow security personnel to pat him down and search through his luggage instead of producing the identification.

Gilmore went through a similar experience with United Airlines employees at San Francisco International Airport later that day.

Both airlines said they were following federal directives. James Harrison, Gilmore's attorney, said the case is about "the ability to travel freely within the United States without having to show your identification at every turn."

He added that laws are being applied, but when people ask to see the rules they are met with, "Sorry that's classified."

A federal judge in San Francisco had dismissed Gilmore's challenge without determining whether such a law existed. Gilmore appealed.

The government requested to keep the case sealed, but on Sept. 10 the court ordered it open to the public. The Justice Department, however, urged the appeals court to reconsider its position Monday.

As floodwaters recede, Ivan recovery beginning

The Associated Press

FRANKLIN, N.C. — Floodwaters from Hurricane Ivan steadily receded across the East, leaving behind layers of silt and mud that homeowners and officials had to slog through as damage assessments began in earnest.

Gov. Mike Easley flew over North Carolina's hardest-hit areas, amazed at the miles of debris stretching beneath his Black Hawk helicopter. He said he'd dip into the state's \$250 million rainy day fund to help with cleanup costs.

"The message today is that you need to tell us what you need, and we'll get it for you," he said. "You will be OK up here, because everyone is pulling together."

Officials from Alabama to North Carolina warned residents to steril-

ize anything in contact with floodwaters. Flooding often inundates sewage-treatment plants, and it's likely that the floodwaters contain some measure of human waste.

"Make sure you're wearing gloves when you clean up, make sure you're wearing some kind of boots, something to keep the material away from your skin," said Pennsylvania Health Department spokesman Richard McGarvey.


President Bush issued a disaster declaration Monday for eight counties in West Virginia. Parts of eight other states previously were declared disaster areas, making residents eligible for aid.

The hurricane and its remnants were blamed for at least 52 deaths in the United States and 70 in the Caribbean. Much of the destruction was caused by flooding in the storm's wake.

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Newspaper carrier in deep water with the law

CARLISLE, Pa. — A plucky newspaper carrier and her father used a rubber raft to reach flooded subscribers — and both wound up in trouble with the law.

Betsy Patrick, a carrier for The Patriot-News of Harrisburg, Pa., delighted six stranded subscribers along the rain-swollen Conodoguinet Creek on Sunday when she and her father floated down. "The people were so excited," Patrick said Monday. "They couldn't leave their houses. It made their day."

But police and a state Fish and Boat Commission officer weren't amused, and cited her father, Rick Patrick, for negligent operation of a water craft. Betsy Patrick said she was arrested for disorderly conduct after arguing about the \$220 citation and handcuffed in front of her 2-year-old daughter.

Patrick said she will fight the charge. "There was no problem with what we did," she said. "We both had life vests on. We had signaling whistles."

From The Associated Press

Convention timing gives GOP cash boost

BY SHARON THEISSER
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — John Kerry cut his campaign spending sharply last month in an effort to stretch \$75 million in government funding, but still started September with several million less than President Bush.

Bush's financial advantage heading into the campaign's final weeks stems from the GOP's decision to hold its presidential nominating convention a month later than the Democratic gathering.

Not only does Kerry have to make his \$75 million in full government financing for the general-election phase of the campaign last a month longer than Bush does, but the Democratic National Committee is burning through its money to promote its nominee faster than the Republican National

Committee is.

Kerry spent \$10 million last month, starting September with \$62 million as Bush was about to get his \$75 million from the Federal Election Commission.

Kerry's August spending compares with \$36 million spent in July, when Kerry could still use private contributions to cover campaign costs.

The DNC started this month with \$56 million in the bank after spending roughly \$46 million in August, much of it on TV and radio ads supporting Kerry and opposing Bush.

The Republican National Committee spent about \$20 million in August, starting September with nearly \$94 million on hand. The party nominated Bush on Sept. 2,



Kerry

putting an end to his private campaign fund-raising just over a month after Kerry's nomination put an end to his.

Both parties are aggressively raising money to spend in the presidential race. In addition to the unlimited amounts they can spend independent of their campaign, each can spend roughly \$16 million in coordination with the

"We either pull out all the stops

over the next few weeks or we will live to regret it," Democratic strategist James Carville told prospective donors in a DNC fund-raising letter sent last week.

Kerry and Bush can assist the party fund-raising efforts, though they can no longer raise campaign money for themselves. Both headlined party fund-raisers in New York on Monday; Kerry helped the DNC raise \$34 million, while the RNC took in \$3 million at an event featuring Bush.

Bush raised a record \$260 million for his re-election bid through last month, including \$18 million in August. His total was more than double the presidential record of roughly \$106 million he set in the 2000 primary race, when he had GOP opponents.

Bush spent nearly \$224 million from the official start of his re-election effort in May 2003

through last month, according to a monthly campaign finance report he filed Monday with the Federal Election Commission. He spent about \$14 million in August.

Bush finished the primary campaign with nearly \$33 million on hand and only about \$2,000 in bills to pay. He cannot spend the leftover money on his own campaign, but can give it to the GOP and other candidates.

Kerry raised \$233 million and spent at least \$185 million from the start of his campaign in January 2003 through July, when private fund-raising ended for his campaign.

The DNC raised about \$192 million from January 2003 through last month and spent about \$138 million, while the RNC raised at least \$271 million and spent roughly \$182 million and spent roughly \$182 million during the parties raised Monday show.

On the issues



Do you rule out raising the retirement age for Social Security benefits to help the program's solvency?

President Bush

"I will keep Social Security's promise to today's seniors, while strengthening it for future generations, without changing benefits for retirees or near retirees or raising payroll taxes. We will instead add voluntary personal savings

accounts to allow today's workers to build a nest egg that can be passed along to their families. These accounts could be part of a comprehensive plan, which according to the Social Security actuaries, will strengthen the system permanently."

Sen. John Kerry

"I will not privatize Social Security. I will not cut benefits. I will not raise the retirement age on America's senior citizens. And together, we will make sure that senior

citizens never have to cut their pills in half because they can't afford lifesaving medicine and more and more of a senior's Social Security check is eaten up by Medicare premiums. That is the choice in this election,"

AP

Bush returns slams on Iraq policy

BY SCOTT LINDLAU
The Associated Press

DERRY, N.H. — Buffeted by criticism from Democratic Sen. John Kerry on Iraq, President Bush accused his Democratic rival Monday of a "pattern of twisting in the wind" and leaving behind a thick of contradictory positions on the war.

Bush struck back shortly after Kerry delivered a stinging critique in New York of the president's handling of the war. Kerry said the steps the commander in chief took "were colossal failures of judgment." The Democrat said Bush had not been honest about the reasons for the war or the cost of the fighting.

"Today my opponent continued his pattern of twisting in the wind," Bush said at a rally. "He apparently woke up this morning and has now decided no, we should not have invaded Iraq, after just last month saying he would have voted for force even knowing everything we know today."

"Incredibly, he now believes our national security would be stronger with Saddam Hussein in power and not in prison," Bush said. "He's saying he prefers the stability of a dictatorship to the hope and security of democracy."

"I couldn't disagree more, and not so long ago, so did my opponent," Bush told an audience of supporters. Bush quoted Kerry as

saying recently, "Those who believe we are not safer with his capture don't have the judgment to be president or the credibility to be elected president."

Bush also charged that Kerry had appropriated his administration's plan for postwar Iraq. "Only three days before the election, my opponent has now settled on a proposal for what to do next, and it's exactly what we're currently doing," the president said.

Kerry said Monday that Bush must do much more in four major areas: getting help from other nations, providing better training for Iraqi security forces, providing benefits to the Iraqi people and ensuring that democratic elections can be held next year as promised.

Kerry adviser denies any tie to CBS documents

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — A top adviser to John Kerry says he talked to a central figure in the controversy over President Bush's National Guard service at the suggestion of a CBS News producer shortly before disputed documents were released by the network.

But Joe Lockhart denied any connection between the Kerry campaign and the papers supplied to the network by the Bill Burkett, the former Texas Army National Guard official he telephoned at CBS' suggestion.

"He had some advice on how to deal with the Vietnam issue and the Swift boat" allegations, Lockhart said in a Monday, Sept. 20, interview. "The fact that CBS News and the high-level GOP-fueled accusations that Kerry exaggerated his Vietnam War record," He said these guys play tough, and we have to put the Vietnam experience into context and have Kerry talk about it more."

Lockhart, the second Kerry ally to confirm contact with Burkett, said he made the call at the suggestion of CBS producer Mary Mapes.

The White House called the exchange evidence of coordination between the Kerry campaign and Burkett.

The fact that CBS News and a high-level adviser to the Kerry campaign coordinated a personal attack on President Bush is a stunning and deeply troubling development," said

White House communications director Dan Bartlett. He urged Kerry to hold accountable anybody involved in helping CBS obtain the documents.

Lockhart denied any involvement. "Bartlett is wrong," he said last Monday.

Earlier, Lockhart said he thanked Burkett for his advice after a three- to four-minute call, and that he does not recall talking to Burkett about Bush's Guard records. "It's baseless to say the Kerry campaign had anything to do with this," he said.

Later, Lockhart said he was sure he had not talked to Burkett about the Guard documents. Burkett did not return a phone call to The Associated Press. He told USA Today in a story for Tuesday's editions that his interest in contacting the campaign had nothing to do with the documents.

"My interest was to get the attention of the national (campaign) to defend against the attacks," Burkett told the newspaper.

CBS News apologized Monday for a "mistake in judgment" in its story questioning Bush's Guard service, claiming it was misled by the source of documents that several experts have dismissed as fakes. The network said an independent panel would look at its reporting about the memos.

CBS News spokesman Kelly Edwards said Mapes had declined to comment.

"This is an example of the kind of thing that the independent panel that will be named in a few days will look into. When that review is complete, we will comment," Edwards said.

Burkett admitted this weekend to CBS that he lied about obtaining the documents from another former National Guard member, the network said. CBS hasn't been able to conclusively tell how he got them, or even whether they're fakes.

Kerry ally Max Cleland, a former Georgia senator, also said he had a brief conversation last month with Burkett, who told him he had information about Bush to counter charges against Kerry's Vietnam War service. Cleland said he gave Burkett's name and phone number to the campaign's research department.

Kerry spokesman David Ginsberg said nobody in the campaign's research department followed up on Burkett's offer of information.

Lockhart said Mapes asked him the weekend before the story broke to call Burkett. "She basically said there's a guy who is being helpful on the story who wants to talk to you," Lockhart said, adding that it was common knowledge that CBS was working on a story raising questions about Bush's Guard service. Mapes told him there were some records "that might move the story forward," Lockhart said. "She didn't tell me what they said."

Debates set at three

DERRY, N.H. — Negotiators for President Bush and Democrat John Kerry have agreed to three 90-minute debates beginning Sept. 30, including one town-hall format with questions from undecided voters.

The two campaigns essentially went along with recommendations from the bipartisan Commission on Presidential Debates — except for the proposed subject matter of the first and third debates.

The topic of the first meeting will be foreign policy and homeland security, rather than the economy as the commission had suggested. The final debate, which was to be on foreign policy, will now be about the economy.

The first debate will be Sept. 30 at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Fla. The second, in town-hall style, will be Oct. 8 at Washington University in St. Louis, and the third will be held Oct. 13 at Arizona State University in Tempe.

From The Associated Press

Loophole lets pharmacies bill twice for same drugs

BY DAVID B. CARUSO
The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — A regulatory loophole is allowing some pharmacy companies to bill government health programs twice for the same drugs, according to whistleblower lawsuits challenging the payments.

The complaints are about a practice called "re-stocking," in which pharmacies resell drugs returned by hospitals or nursing homes. The medications often were for patients who had died.

A majority of states allow the return of medication still sealed in its original packaging and stored in a controlled environment to prevent millions of dollars worth of expensive drugs from being destroyed needlessly.

The savings, however, are not always passed along to buyers.

In a case recently decided by a federal appeals court, a former administrator at a subsidiary of the pharmacy company Omnicare alleged the firm was cheating the Medicaid program by charging it twice — the sale and the resale — for restocked drugs.

Thomas Quinn said he questioned the practice after seeing workers open packages of returned drugs, push unused pills from their foil packs and place them in fresh boxes, then resell the boxes with drugs to make them ready for resale.

The Omnicare subsidiary, based in New Jersey, informed Medicaid when a drug was returned but offered it a rebate of only 50 percent of the original price.

The 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals this month called such double payments "disturbing," but said it could not find anything in New Jersey's Medicaid rules requiring the company to give a full refund for restocked drugs.

"We are constrained by the lack of a regulation,"

Judge Jane R. Roth wrote in the court's decision. "We believe that Congress and/or the New Jersey legislature might serve Medicaid well if this lack of regulation were corrected."

A spokeswoman for the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which oversees the Medicaid program, said each state may set its own rules regarding refunds for returned drugs.

Quinn's lawyer is frustrated by the ruling but said it would be hard to argue with the court.

"We have a situation where there is no regulation. There is no accountability," lawyer Harvey S. Mars said. "A company could deliver the medication, take it back the next day and resell it, and would be paid twice."

Omnicare officials did not return telephone messages.

In other states with different Medicaid rules, the Covington, Ky.-based Omnicare has been less successful in defending itself against complaints. In 1998, the company agreed to pay \$5.3 million to settle allegations that one of its subsidiaries improperly resold drugs in Missouri without crediting Medicaid.

Similar charges have been filed against other pharmacy benefit firms.

In a whistleblower lawsuit filed this year, two pharmacists at Caremark Rx Inc. alleged that the Nashville, Tenn.-based firm defrauded a Florida health plan for retired state workers by failing to give it credit for medications that were returned, unopened, by customers. The case is pending.

Taxpayers Against Fraud, a Washington D.C.-based watchdog group, advocates a clear federal rule requiring pharmacies to reimburse Medicaid for drugs that are returned for resale, said spokesman Patrick Burns.

"Someone needs to close this loophole fast," Burns said. "This is just a classic case where the failure of the state to act abets waste."



OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY/AP

Researcher Stephen Pennycook adjusts an electron microscope at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Oak Ridge, Tenn. The microscope has set a record for viewing the smallest objects.

Lab breaks own record in viewing tiniest particles

BY DUNCAN MANSFIELD
The Associated Press

OAK RIDGE, Tenn. — Oak Ridge National Laboratory researchers are peering into the atomic world with record clarity, developing an electron microscope image that can distinguish the individual, dumbbell-shaped atoms of a silicon crystal.

"Every time you see something more clearly, you learn some secrets," said Stephen Pennycook, who heads the lab's electron microscopy group.

In a Sept. 17 article in the journal *Science*, Pennycook and colleagues wrote that they have achieved an image resolution at 0.6 angstrom, breaking the previous record of 0.7 angstrom which the lab set earlier this year.

An angstrom, the smallest wavelength of light, is about

500,000 times smaller than the thickness of a human hair.

Researchers say being able to see how materials bond together at an atomic level could prove a significant benefit to the semiconductor industry, chemistry and in the development of new materials.

For its latest findings, the Oak Ridge lab used a 300-kilovolt state-of-the-art electron microscope aided by new computerized imaging technology developed by Nion Co. of Kirkland, Wash.

The technology, called aberration correction, fixes imperfections on the microscope's electron lenses.

"We are crossing that threshold where we can really see atoms clearly for the first time ever," Pennycook said.

Pennycook compared the resolution correction technology to being able to focus 50 senses simultaneously.

Girl foils plot to bomb school

The Associated Press

CLINTON TOWNSHIP, Mich. — A boy who said on the Internet that he planned to bomb his high school was turned in by the 16-year-old daughter of a university police officer who heads a cyber-crimes unit, authorities said.

Authorities credited Celia McGinty of Moscow, Idaho, with foiling a plot to bomb Chippewa Valley High School outside Detroit.

Police said a search of 17-year-old Andrew Osantowski's home last week turned up instructions for making a bomb and videotapes of him with assault weapons. Osantowski was arrested Thursday; his father and a family friend also were charged.

McGinty met Osantowski online in a music chat room three weeks ago. She said Monday on ABC's "Good Morning America" that the boy was very specific about how he would take revenge on teachers and schoolmates, including that he planned to kill a police liaison officer.

"He told me where he had his weapons," she said. "He gave me his name and address. Who would do that?"

Police said Osantowski alerted her father, George, who heads the cyber-crime unit for the Washington State University police.

Osantowski has been jailed on more than \$1 million bond on 10 felony charges, including threatening an act of terrorism, and

could face up to 20 years in prison. A judge entered a plea of not guilty on his behalf.

Items found in his home included weapons and ammunition, Nazi flags and books about white supremacy and Adolf Hitler, police said.

Marvin Osantowski, 52, the boy's father, was charged with concealing stolen firearms and pleaded not guilty. Bond was set at \$500,000.

Dominic Quentary, 33, a family friend, provided the teen with bomb-making instructions, police said. Investigators said they found explosives, weapons and drugs in his home.

He was charged with possessing explosives and other counts and pleaded not guilty.

Bond was set at \$100,000.

EPA finds coliform bacteria in airliner drinking water

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Nearly one of every eight passenger airlines tested by the Environmental Protection Agency carried drinking water that fails agency standards because it contains coliform bacteria, the agency said Monday.

EPA enforcement chief Tom Skinner said passengers whose immune systems are compromised may want to avoid drink-

ing water from airplane galleys or lavatories, although he noted that test results were preliminary.

Of the planes checked, 20 tested positive for total coliform bacteria, which could signal the presence of other harmful bacteria. Two planes tested positive for *E. coli* bacteria, which in a severe form can cause gastrointestinal illness.

"This is something that needs further

analysis, but also immediate action," Skinner said, adding that the EPA will begin further testing in a few weeks.

Air Transport Association spokesman Doug Wills said the airlines are confident their drinking water is safe, saying, "No one has gotten sick from airline drinking water."

The EPA randomly tested the water in August and September on 158 aircraft, including small commuter planes and jumbo

jets for domestic and international flagged carriers.

Skinner said the agency will do more sampling to determine if the bacteria comes from the original water supply, the tanker trucks that load water onto planes or the airplanes themselves.

Air Transport Association President David Stempler said airline water can stagnate in an airplane's tank, and that it can pick up bacteria, particulates and rust.

IN THE WORLD

Iran admits its starting uranium conversion

BY GEORGE JAHN
The Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria — Shuffling off a 35-second ultimatum, Iran revealed Tuesday that it had started converting tons of raw uranium as part of technology that could be used to make nuclear arms.

The International Atomic Energy Agency's board of governors passed a resolution on Saturday demanding that Iran freeze all uranium enrichment — including conversion — and expressing alarms at Tehran's plans to start the process.

"Describing his country as a victim of 'pressures imposed by the United States,' Iranian Vice President Reza Azharsaid said that of the more than 40 tons of uranium being mined for enrichment 'some (already) has been used.'"

Enrichment can be used to generate power or to create the highly processed, weapons-grade uranium that can be used for nuclear warheads.

Iran insists its aims are peaceful, and President Mohammad Khatami suggested his country would not bargain on enrichment. He said Iran was determined to exercise its right to "peaceful nuclear technology" — even at the risk of severing ties with the IAEA, thereby removing all international oversight.

"We will continue along our path even if it leads to an end to international supervision" of Iran's nuclear activities, Khatami said at a military parade in Tehran.

Azharsaid said the U.S.-led pressure was meant to deny Tehran access to its right to nonmilitary nuclear technology. "Tests are going on successfully" to make uranium hexafluoride gas, he said.

IAEA spokeswoman Melissa Fleming said the agency head Mohamed ElBaradei continues to call on Iran, as did the board, to suspend such a test as part of their confidence-building measures.

Azharsaid did not detail the stage of conversion, or the amounts involved.

A senior diplomat familiar with Iran's nuclear activities, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Iran apparently began conversion in late August and had stopped at a precursor of uranium hexafluoride. He suggested the pause could be linked to indecision within the leadership on whether to flout the IAEA board resolution or give in to and freeze all enrichment-related activities including conversion.

Azharsaid suggested Iran's course of action remained open and said Tehran "will decide on the basis of our national interests" what to do.

The resolution passed unanimously Saturday by the agency's governing board demanded that Iran freeze all work on uranium enrichment. It specifically expressed alarm at the conversion plans involving the more than 40 tons of raw uranium.

Converted into uranium hexafluoride and repeatedly spun in centrifuges, more than 40 tons of raw uranium would have a yield of more than 200 pounds of weapons-grade highly enriched uranium. Experts say that would be enough to make five crude nuclear weapons.

The IAEA resolution, suggesting that Iran may have to answer to the U.N. Security Council if it defied the demands, said the next board meeting, in November, would "decide whether or not further steps are appropriate" in ensuring Iran complies.

Tehran says it is stopping short of enrichment. But the resolution also calls for a halt of related activities, including making, assembling and testing centrifuges — and producing the uranium hexafluoride.

Iran is not prohibited from enrichment under its obligations to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. But for months, Iran has faced international pressure to suspend such activities as a good-faith gesture.

\$24 billion a year needed to fight hunger, U.N. says

BY JONATHAN EWING
The Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS — The developing world needs \$24 billion a year in investment and other spending to help it overcome vicious cycles of hunger that remain both the cause and effect of its poverty, a top U.N. official said.

"When a significant portion of a nation's population is hungry, that nation will never develop economically. And it will never pull itself out of poverty," said Dr. Jacques Diouf, director general of the Rome-based U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization. "Because they are hungry, they can't produce, and as long as they can't produce, they will always go hungry," Diouf said.

"It's a vicious circle."

Diouf's remarks came Monday, one day before the annual U.N. General Assembly ministerial meeting focusing on ways to finance the alleviation of poverty and hunger to ensure that millions are not left behind by globalization.

Nations in the developing world need investment to help stimulate agricultural production and to build up the infrastructure for production, particularly rural roads that allow farmers to get their crops to markets, irrigation and storage facilities.

"We set the objective in 1996 of cutting by half the number of hungry people by 2015," Diouf said. "But we are reducing the number of hungry people by 2 million a year. At this rate, we will achieve the goal by 2150."

The United Nations estimates that more than 1 billion people in the world go hungry.

The greatest problem, in terms of population, is in Africa, where 26 percent are undernourished, Diouf said. But in terms of absolute numbers, the most hungry people are in Asia.

To quicken the process of reducing hunger and reach its goals, the FAO estimated that additional public spending of about \$24 billion annually is needed. Raising production in poor rural communities, \$2.3 billion; promoting sustainable use of natural resources, \$7.4 billion; increasing investment in rural infrastructure and market access, \$7.8 billion; supporting agricultural research and education, \$1.1 billion; and improving access to food for the most needy, \$5.2 billion.

Devoting more resources to agriculture and rural development will increase productivity, employment and opportunities to access to food, particularly in rural areas and countries where hunger is most common.

Diouf also pointed out that increasing productivity is in the interest of developed countries because transforming hungry people to consumers would stimulate the buying of goods and services.



Haitian families stay outside of their homes on Monday after flooding in Gonaves, Haiti. Receding floodwaters raged through neighborhoods of Haiti's third largest city, dragging people from their homes and forcing survivors to spend the night in trees, atop cars and on rooftops following Tropical Storm Jeanne.

More than 600 killed in Haiti from flooding

BY AMY BRACKEN
The Associated Press

GONAIVES, Haiti — Workers started digging a mass grave for the bodies of flood victims Tuesday after Tropical Storm Jeanne left more than 600 people dead, another tragedy in the Caribbean country in a year marked by revolts, military interventions and deadly floods.

While some corpses would be buried en masse to prevent health risks, others were being claimed by families for burial in the countryside.

Hardest hit was the northwest port of Gonaves, where some 500 bodies were retrieved, said Toussaint Kongo-Doudou, a spokesman for the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Haiti. Another 100 were killed elsewhere in the country, and there were reports that as many as 1,000 could have been killed.

Bloated corpses were piled at three fly-infested morgues in Gonaves, where the electricity was still off, temperatures reached into the 90s and water still lapped at the sides of wooden houses Tuesday, days after the passage of Jeanne.

The European Union sent aid, to be distributed by the International Red Cross and other aid agencies in Haiti, according to U.N. Development Commissioner Poul Nielson.

Aid workers were struggling to help people under growing security threats on Tuesday, said Hans Havik, from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the world's largest humanitarian organization based in Geneva.

Interim President Boniface Alexandre addressed the U.N. General Assembly on Tuesday, pleading for help from the international community. "I appeal urgently for the solidarity of the international community so it may once again support the government in the framework of emergency assistance."

Floods are particularly devastating in Haiti, the poorest country in the Americas, because it is almost completely deforested, leaving few roots to hold back rushing waters or mudslides. Most of the trees have been chopped down to make charcoal for cooking.

Karachi suicide attack alert

KARACHI, Pakistan — Police increased security outside the U.S. Consulate in the southern Pakistani city of Karachi on Tuesday after receiving a tip that female suicide bombers might target it, the deputy police chief said.

Police said they had no specific information about the women who might target the consulate, which was the scene of a car bomb attack in June 2002 that left 14 Pakistanis dead. Deputy city police chief Fayyaz Leghari said police have deployed five or six female officers outside the consulate to search any woman who visits.

Returning Bosnia refugees

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — The United Nations refugee agency announced Tuesday the symbolic return of the millionth refugee to Bosnia, but those who've come home are still faced with poverty, repairing war-damaged houses and rebuilding lives in divided communities.

Udo Jaz, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees' representative in Bosnia, said the return of 1 million of the 2.2 million people displaced marked a "significant milestone in the long process of rebuilding a nation shattered during the 1992-95 war."

Local and international officials have been working hard to promote reconciliation between neighbors in hopes that refugees will feel safe enough to return. Since 1995, UNHCR alone has helped over \$500 million to help Bosnians come back, Jaz said. The war among Bosnia's Muslims, Serbs and Croats claimed 260,000 lives and drove half of the prewar population of 4.3 million out of their homes.

German rail prices to rise

BERLIN — Germany's national railway said Tuesday it will raise long-distance ticket prices by more than 3 percent in December, citing soaring oil prices and the resulting higher energy costs it has to do so.

Prices will rise by an average 3.1 percent on Dec. 12, with tickets for trips of more than 250 miles going up by 4.2 percent, Deutsche Bahn said.

Deutsche Bahn said it also planned to raise prices for regional journeys, but said it would need permission from the government to raise energy costs.

The state-owned company said it was forced to act by the increase in energy costs, which have been pushed up by increases in the price of oil and gas.

"As the largest energy user in the country, Deutsche Bahn cannot in the long term avoid these market developments," it said in a statement.

From The Associated Press

Overseas access to voter Web site blocked

BY JOHN LEICESTER

The Associated Press

PARIS — Americans abroad, whose votes could be crucial if the Nov. 2 presidential election proves close, are being denied access to a Department of Defense Web site designed to make it easier for them to cast absentee ballots.

The problem concerns blocks placed on access to the Web site of the Federal Voting Assistance Program, a Defense Department division to help expatriate American citizens, including servicemen and women. The site's address is www.fvap.gov.

In an e-mail, a site Web manager, Susan Leader, said access is being refused to some Internet service providers that were used by hackers to attack U.S. government sites.

"There has been a marked increase in Web attacks on government computers, more as we get closer to the election. As a result, many Internet service providers have been blocked from accessing our site," Leader wrote.

Brett Riersson, a Hong Kong-based Democrat who wrote to Leader about the problem, provided The Associated Press with a

copy of her e-mail. Riersson says he has tracked complaints from users of at least 27 ISPs in 25 countries who have been denied access to information from the Pentagon-run site.

He fears that U.S. citizens may be unable to vote if they can't download absentee ballot forms from www.fvap.gov or another site, www.oversavevote.com, which he co-founded, or collect the forms in person from an American embassy or consulate.

"It has the potential to disenfranchise anyone who does not live next to a U.S. Embassy," Riersson

said in a telephone interview. But he also noted that the Democratic Party has set up the site www.oversavevote2004.com, where even people using blocked ISPs can still register.

The sister of Democratic hopeful Sen. John Kerry said she was "outraged" and accused the Pentagon of "gross bureaucratic negligence and indifference to the rights of American voters."

"That the Pentagon ... has chosen to surrender to unspecified 'hackers' without firing a single shot in defense of American democracy is suspect," Diana Kerry said in a statement.

Pentagon spokeswoman Lt. Col. Ellen Krenke confirmed that some ISPs which have been used to launch attacks are banned from access to military .mil and .gov sites. But she said the blocks were not related to the election nor designed to silence Democrat voting abroad — as some of them suspect.

"It would stop the Republicans, too, right? It's both sides. We're not just letting one barren party through," Krenke said.

Some U.S. government agencies have previously blocked access to their Web sites without Internet providers, and even entire countries, where hacking attempts have been detected.

Karzai steels up image before vote

BY STEPHEN GRAHAM

The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Critics may still lampoon Afghan President Hamid Karzai as the "mayor of Kabul" for his feeble authority beyond the capital, but surprise moves to ditch a powerful faction leader as his running mate and oust a regional strongman have added fuel to Karzai's image before the Oct. 9 presidential election.

Karzai is to address the U.N. General Assembly session in New York on Tuesday as his war-battered nation's interim leader. Most observers think he will win the vote handsily against 17 opponents, many of them unknown to the majority of Afghans.

"If people can vote freely, I will win," Karzai said at a news conference this month. Speculation is growing that his chief electoral rival, former Education Minister Yunus Qanuni, may call a deal with Karzai and abandon his challenge for the presidency in return for a post in the next Cabinet.

At the United Nations, Karzai is expected to list his country's advances in the three years since the United States routed its former Taliban rulers for their alliance with Osama bin Laden.

The Afghan economy is recovering along with its battered health and education systems; a new constitution was passed in January; and millions of former refugees have streamed back from Pakistan and Iran.

On the downside, Taliban rebels still dog the south and east of Afghanistan, and a U.N.-backed campaign to disarm warlords who control much of the country has proved a dismal failure.

Karzai's only major campaign event so far — a school-opening in the southeastern city of Gardiz last week — was aborted when suspected Taliban militants fired a rocket at his helicopter.

Karzai's 17 opponents in the landmark vote also point to widespread dismay at the slow pace of reconstruction and corruption among officials.

Nevertheless, in recent weeks, the Afghan leader has reasserted his authority and put his political rivals off balance.

In July, Karzai vowed liberal-minded Afghans and won applause from the international community for dropping Defense Minister Abdullah Fahim, arguably the country's most powerful warlord, as his vice-presidential candidate.

Then in September, he deployed national army troops and deposed



Afghan President Hamid Karzai gestures before his speech on his election platform at the Kabul Television Studio in the Afghan capital on Saturday. Karzai is campaigning in Kabul before Afghanistan's first direct presidential vote.

the defiant warlord of western Afghanistan, Ismail Khan, as the governor of Herat province after a burst of deadly factional fighting in the region.

In doing so, Karzai has shed his reputation for hesitancy. He raised more eyebrows this month by denouncing former militia leaders who have grown rich from the country's war and drug economy.

"The people who have got Land Cruisers and palaces and power through the gun are not the representatives of the mujahideen," Karzai said. "If you want to serve

the mujahideen, you should rebuild this country, not rake up millions of dollars."

His closest allies are enthused and say he must not turn back.

"In Afghanistan, whoever loses power doesn't matter any more," Reconstruction Minister Amin Farhang said, playing down fears that the ousted leaders could incite violence.

But Karzai's shake-up risks ethnic discord.

He is a member of the main Pashtun ethnic group, the country's traditional rulers and bulwark of the former Taliban regime.

Israel: U.S. will sell 5,000 smart weapons

BY LAURIE COPANS

The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — The United States will sell Israel nearly 5,000 smart bombs in one of the largest weapons deals between the allies in years, Israeli military sources said Tuesday.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, the sources said the deal will expand Israel's existing supply of the weapons. They did not identify possible targets.

The Israeli newspaper Haaretz said the deal is valued at \$319 million and was revealed in a Pentagon report made to the U.S. Congress a few weeks ago. Funding for the sale will come from U.S. military aid to Israel.

Disclosure of the deal comes amid escalating Israeli worries over Iran's nuclear development program.

Israel, along with a number of Western countries, fears that Iran is trying to produce nuclear weapons. Iran says its nuclear program is for generating electricity.

Defying a key demand set by 35 nations, Iran announced Tuesday that it has started converting raw uranium into the gas needed for enrichment, a process that can be used to make nuclear weapons.

The bombs Israel is acquiring include airborne versions, guidance units, training bombs and detonators. They are guided by an existing Israeli satellite used by the military.

As part of the deal, Israel will receive 500 one-ton bombs that can destroy two-meter concrete walls, 2,500 one-ton bombs, 1,000 half-ton bombs and 500 quarter-ton bombs, the sources said.

The Israeli military sources would not say whether the bombs would be intended for use against Iran. They ruled out the possibility that they could be used against Palestinian targets.

Israel drew heavy international criticism after a one-ton smart bomb meant for a senior Palestinian militant also killed 15 civilians in an attack on the Gaza Strip in July 2002. It has rarely used such weapons since then.

Woman breaks scorpion record

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia — A Malaysian woman has broken a world record by enduring 32 days enclosed in a glass box with 6,000 scorpions during seven stings in the process, her sponsor claimed Tuesday.

Nur Malena Hassan, 27, will remain in the case, on display in a shopping mall in the eastern city of Kuantan, until Saturday, said Bohari Rahmat, whose biscuit company sponsored the stunt.

Late Monday, Nur Malena surpassed the previous record held by Kanchana Ketkeaw from Thailand, who spent 31 days in a glass box with 3,400 scorpions, Bohari said.

Bohari said he hadn't talked to Nur Malena since she reclaimed her record, which she first won in 2001 by living for 30 days with 2,700 scorpions.

A spokeswoman for the Malaysia Book of Records, told The Associated Press that video and other documentation were being sent to the Guinness Book of Records.

Syrian forces leaving Beirut

BEIRUT, Lebanon — Syria, under growing international pressure to end its longtime military presence in Lebanon, began pulling back more than 1,000 of its 20,000 troops Tuesday, a senior Lebanese military official said.

The military official, who declined to be named, said troops in the Beirut area would be moved away from the capital to new positions within Lebanon. It was not a withdrawal, the official told The Associated Press, adding it was expected to be completed in a few days.

Defense Minister Mahmoud Hammoud, emerging from a meeting of senior Lebanese and Syrian military officers in Beirut, said the redeployment indicates "the security situation in Lebanon is becoming more stabilized."

But Syrian Information Minister Ahmad al-Hassan said Syria was not bowing to outside pressure. Lahoud also said the redeploy-

ment was a matter between Lebanon and Syria.

Inquiry into alleged poisoning

KIEV, Ukraine — Lawmakers voted overwhelmingly Tuesday to investigate the alleged poisoning of Viktor Yushchenko, a key presidential candidate who is running neck-in-neck with the ruling party candidate with just weeks to go before the election.

The 425-17 vote to set up the investigative commission is viewed as a blow to the outgoing President Leonid Kuchma's allies in parliament and to Viktor Yanukovich, the country's prime minister and Kuchma's hand-picked candidate in the Oct. 31 elections.

Yushchenko fell ill Sept. 6 after a week was hospitalized in Vienna, Austria, for treatment. His campaign manager claimed Yushchenko was poisoned; doctors in Vienna said that was possible but could not confirm it.

From The Associated Press

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR/OPINION

She was a soldier first

I recently read the letter "Sending women to war wrong" (Aug. 15) from a person in Nebraska. I proudly serve in the 267th Ordnance Company from Nebraska and I'm also a woman.

The letter writer talked about the death of one of our soldiers. It upset me because Sgt. 1st Class Linda Ann Tarango-Griess was always a soldier first, and she set many high standards for the rest of the female soldiers in her unit. Tarango-Griess was in charge of me for almost five years and she always pulled her own weight right along with the guys. I am proud to be a woman and we smart enough to realize that women can do the job of being a soldier.

Tarango-Griess will always be remembered as a soldier and for what she did for her country.

Sgt. Christina Auluer
 Camp Speicher, Iraq

Article was shocking

I'm accustomed to seeing stories in Stars and Stripes that deal with distasteful subjects, but I was shocked to open the Sept. 9 edition and find an article glorifying a convicted felon ("Slaying through In the article, Journal Bureau compares his criminal activity and its consequences to the handicaps of Ray Charles and Stevie Wonder. The low point of the article is the author's observation about the lyrics on the CD: "They roll with righteous fury at

Tell us what you think

Stars and Stripes welcomes your comments on editorials and columns that are published in the newspaper, and values letters on topics of importance to the lives of our readers. All letters must be signed, and must include the writer's address or base and telephone number. Please limit all letters to 300 words. We reserve the right to edit letters for length, taste and clarity.

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the justice system."

We are here in Iraq at the behest of the Department of Defense, trying to bring law and order to a very lawless land, and an official publication of the Department of Defense is glorifying lawlessness. I am stunned by the irony.

The editorial staff of the Stars and Stripes owes an apology to all servicemembers, as well as to the victims of this felon's crimes.

David Miller

Tatill, Iraq

Pensions at 50

I've served faithfully for 17 years in the U.S. Army, for nine of those years I was regular Army. I would like to address the issue of pensions for reservists.

Since 9/11, our lives have changed drastically. It is now election time, and we need to ensure that the future of every reservist is part of this presidential campaign.

If reservists are going to be a part of the anti-terrorist campaign, with an unknown time frame of deployment, we should be able to receive our pension at age 50.

The way things are going we've lost a lot of soldiers and there is no doubt that we will be losing more before this campaign is over. What I suggest to all servicemembers is to appeal to the press to be our voice before we cast our absentee ballot. I say all servicemembers because those who are regular Army may decide to end their careers and become a reservist, like myself.

Why should we have to wait until we're 60 to receive a pension, especially when we've fulfilled our obligation at the age of 45-50? This only applies to the fortunate soldiers who don't get hit by mortars, bombs, hostile fire, snipers, suicide bombers and friendly fire.

With the press behind us, we should hear some response from our elected officials.

Staff Sgt. Mark Williams

Camp Doha, Kuwait

CBS plans to shed light on old stories

By ROY RIVENBURG
 Los Angeles Times

On the heels of Dan Rather's dis-
 rupted report about 1970s memos
 that criticized President Bush's
 National Guard service, CBS
 plans to air several other investigations
 based on newly discovered
 documents.

Satire

■ The JFK assassination:
 Rather reveals start-
 tling evidence that Lee
 Harvey Oswald met with
 President Kennedy in Dallas. "It's all about
 Oswald's Palm Pilot," Rather says.

■ Biblical archeology: In news that
 could rock Christianity, CBS has car-
 bon-dated a 1st-century scroll in which the
 Apostle Paul admits to having doubts
 about the Resurrection. Theologians con-
 sulted by the network vouched for the genu-
 ineness of the scroll, which is titled
 "A Letter to the Corinthians or Current
 Resident."

■ Gay rights: An early draft of the Bill
 of Rights contained a constitutional amend-
 ment allowing homosexual marriage, CBS
 learned. Experts uncovered the secret
 amendment beneath a layer of Liquid

Paper.

■ Watergate:
 Using new technolo-
 gies, CBS has been
 able to restore the
 18-minute gap
 in President Nixon's in-
 famous Watergate
 tapes. In the most
 damaging
 Nixon admits to author-
 izing the break-in at
 Democratic head-
 quarters "We totally
 punk'd McGovern!"
 but orders H.R. Hal-
 deman to take the
 fall: "The tribe has
 spoken. You've been
 voted off the island."

■ Hitler's last words: As Russian tanks
 rolled toward the Nazi dictator's Berlin
 bunker, Adolf Hitler sent a final communi-
 cation to his generals, according to CBS.

Several critics have questioned the au-
 thenticity of the document, saying the ty-
 pography used wasn't available in 1945.
 Others find it odd that Hitler sent the com-
 munique on a fax machine.

"It's preposterous," one source said.
 "Everyone knows Hitler preferred sing-

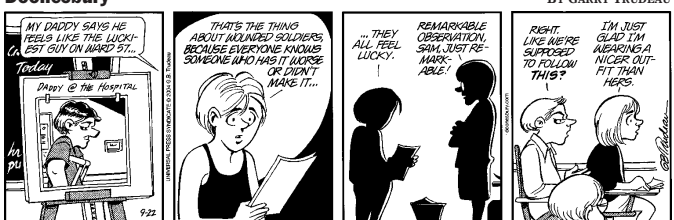
"CBS Evening News" anchor Dan Rather speaks on his Monday
 broadcast about the controversy surrounding documents used
 in a story questioning President Bush's National Guard service.

ing telegrams."

■ Miscellaneous: In other upcoming
 episodes, "60 Minutes" will air a voiceless
 message left by Maya Indians to explain
 their mysterious disappearance, unveil a
 prehistoric cave drawing of Neil Ar-
 mstrong walking on the moon and broadcast
 a home video of young George Washington
 chopping down a cherry tree with his
 Black & Decker chain saw.

Los Angeles Times staff writer Susanna Timmons
 contributed to this fully authenticated article.

BY GARRY TEDEAU



OPINION

Most U.S. voters see Bush as the safe bet

BY JAMES K. GLASSMAN

Scripps Howard

Forget the polls. The electronic market maintained by the University of Iowa's College of Business, which makes you put your money where your opinions are, was showing Sunday that George W. Bush had become a 3-2 favorite to beat John Kerry. In other words, to win a dollar if you're right on Nov. 2, you have to put up 60 cents today for a bet on Bush but just 40 cents for Kerry.

That's the biggest gap, by far, since the market started offering the wager in early June. The Iowa market (check it out at <http://www.biz.uiowa.edu/iem/markets/>) isn't infallible, but academic research shows it has a better track record than public opinion surveys, and it tends to be far more stable — which is why the latest numbers are so shocking and significant.

What's going on? First, a re-election campaign, as the political scientists tell us, is traditionally a referendum on the incumbent: Bush, yes or no. But the Bush strategists have brilliantly managed to make the 2004 race, in large measure, a referendum on the challenger, and so far, Kerry has not measured up.

Yes, the first of three debates is set for Sept. 30. But can Kerry change enough minds in little over a month? Second, and more important, Bush has been running on a powerful implicit slogan. It is never flat-out stated by the campaign, or by anyone else, but it is there, nonetheless, in every voter's mind. The slogan is this: "He Kept Us Safe." You won't find it on a bumper sticker because we all know that safety can be transitory, and we don't want to tempt fate (or god the terrorists themselves).

For the past three years, the ABC News/Washington Post survey has asked Americans, "How concerned are you about the possibility there will be more terrorist attacks in the United States?" Two weeks after 9/11, the proportion answering "a great deal" or "some" was 82 percent. The figure had declined a year later to 72 percent, and it has stayed in that range ever since.

Three-quarters of Americans are concerned about terrorism here, and they should be.

But look a little deeper. Another survey, by CBS News and The New York Times, found a month after 9/11 that half of Americans surveyed thought that another terrorist attack "within the next few

months" was "very likely." Within six months, the proportion had dropped to about one-third, where it stayed, with some ups and downs, through February 2003. Then, as the Iraq war was starting, the fears started declining. The latest poll, last month, showed only 17 percent thought an attack on our soil was imminent.

Despite the contention of Democrats, Americans apparently see the actions the United States has taken in Afghanistan and Iraq as making us safer.

Now the clincher. CBS asked in August: "Do you think the policies of the Bush administration have made the United States safer from terrorism?" Those who answered, "yes, safer," outnumbered those who said, "no, less" safe by 51 percent to 24 percent.

Pundits who say that outsourcing or health care or gay marriage or the deficit are the main issues in this campaign are kidding themselves. What people really care about is their safety. In October 2001, Gallup found that one-fourth of Americans were "very worried" that they or members of their families would become victims of terrorism. Today, the figure is 11 percent.

Right or wrong, most voters be-



lieve that Bush gets credit for making them safer. He took the battle to the enemy.

Have there been costs? Certainly, in terms of troops killed and wounded, money spent, inconvenience suffered, personal freedom abridged and the enmity of other nations aroused. But most voters, I suspect, see [that] these costs are worth paying. Try this thought experiment: What would you pay, in dollars, to lift the threat of terror-

ism from your family? My guess is that the number would be a very high one, that it would dwarf any savings you think you might get if Kerry's health plan is more efficient than Bush's (which it is not, by the way).

Of course, Bush has not lifted the threat of terrorism entirely. But he's done enough, in his response to 9/11, to merit that bumper sticker:

James K. Glassman is a fellow at the Atlantic Enterprise Institute and host of the Web site TechCentralStation.com.

Tweaks would let all states get into swing of things

WASHINGTON We, the people of the nonswing states, feel like second-class citizens in the current election contest.

For those of us who live in states that the pollsters and common sense say will vote dependably "red" for President Bush or "blue" for Sen. John Kerry, the November presidential election seems eerily to be not about us.

That's because we are the seemingly huge majority of Americans who do not happen to live in the five or 10 "swing states"

made up of people who apparently have a hard time making up their minds.

These are the people, I suspect, who I always end up behind in the supermarket checkout line — the ones struck mute when the checkout clerk asks, "Paper or plastic?"

And what do we, who live in states where most people long ago made up their minds, receive for our devotion? Neglect.

Like the proverbial wallflower who never gets asked to dance, we twiddle our thumbs on the sidelines and try to maintain a smidgen of dignity while the big-time candidates who the daylighters of these moodily, fickle, wishy-washy, undecided swing states. "Swing" states? It even sounds promiscuous.

Who are these "undecided" voters anyway? I'm beginning to believe that they made up their minds weeks ago, but they're enjoying the attention too much to admit it.

C'mon, candidates, nonswing-state voters want some love, too. As the House Speaker Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill Jr. used to say, people like to be asked.

But help may be on the way. The Electoral

College system at the root of this mess has come under renewed criticism since the Florida debacle in 2000, when Al Gore won a majority of the popular vote but George Bush won with more electoral votes (and the Supreme Court's help).

It is the Electoral College, after all, that calls on candidates to win one state at a time, since electoral votes in every state save two go to whichever candidate wins a majority of the state's popular vote.

Because the Constitution allows each state to decide how to choose its electors, Maine in 1969 and Nebraska in 1992 decided to replace their systems with proportional schemes. They award two votes to the overall winner in each state and award the rest by congressional district. So far the statewide winners have swept all of the districts in both states, so proportional voting has not made a big difference.

But, taking that as a step further, Colorado voters will decide on Nov. 2 if their state will change to a proportional system

that would award electoral votes to each candidate in proportion to their statewide totals.

If it works out, other states may rush to follow suit, although the scheme does have its pitfalls. For example, if Kerry carries the state, he could end up with fewer electoral votes under the proposed plan than he would receive under the state's current system. That would be ironic, since it is Democrats who have been pushing hardest for the change in the traditionally Republican state.

And, if Colorado decides to award its 9 votes proportionally, Republicans undoubtedly will try to retaliate with similar measures in Democratic strongholds such as California, with its 55 electoral votes.

Either way, the Electoral College is a scheme whose time has passed, yet it holds on, largely because small states fear that the major candidates would ignore them. Hey, small states, welcome to my world.

Small-state voters might find reassurance from researchers at the Washington-based Center for Voting and Democracy, which fa-

vors direct voting for president. Their breakdowns of nationwide population densities find that neither candidate would come anywhere close to victory by campaigning only in the large television markets, according to David Moon, the center's program director.

Between the extremes of abolition and the status quo, proportional voting offers a reasonable compromise, if it can get past party-line suspicions. The latest redistricting picked the Electoral College in favor of Bush, since states that favored him four years ago nudged up nine votes. That gives Bush supporters a reason in the short term, at least, to hold onto the current system.

With that in mind, it may take another split decision like 2000 to ignite a major movement against the Electoral College, especially if a Democrat won most of the electoral votes and a Republican won the popular vote, reversing the 2000 roles. Some issues never cross party lines until both parties have felt the pain.

Clarence Page is a Chicago Tribune columnist.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



Church funding low

VT BURLINGTON — The Vermont Catholic Church says concerns that some churches may close in the coming months is slowing efforts to raise \$2.35 million dollars for this year.

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington kicks off its annual fund-raising campaign each June with hopes of finishing by the end of the summer. But this year's drive is about \$100,000 short, requiring church leaders to extend their efforts into the fall.

The diocese has asked its 149,000 Vermont members to support the annual Bishop's Fund, which pays for church programs, 17 parochial schools, four elder-care homes and Vermont Catholic Charities.

Glasses shot down

NM ALBUQUERQUE — Officials at Rio Grande High School aren't getting a buzz from the school's homecoming memento.

Nearly 100 shot glasses etched with "Dreams Will Come True 2004" were handed out in advance of the celebration last week — until the principal got word of it. School activities director James Chavez took the blame — saying the cheapest glass was a \$1.32 shot glass. He said he thought they could be used to hold candies or toothpicks, not alcohol.

Corny proposal

OH NAPOLEON — Corey Cook hoped his girlfriend would accept a marriage proposal — no matter how corny it might appear.

So he paid a northwest Ohio farmer to carve the words, "Michelle, will you marry me?" into his family's cornfield.

A heart surrounded the message, which covered about seven acres — large enough for Michelle See to spot from a small plane, as the couple flew from Columbus to a cabin in northeast Indiana.

"She just started giggling like a little girl on Christmas morning," said Cook, who gave her a ring as they passed over the massive message. She said "yes."

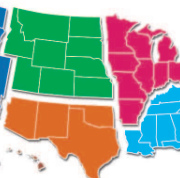
Disturbing behavior

MA BOSTON — Boston police, responding to a call about a disturbance at an apartment, shot and wounded a man after he sliced an officer in the leg with a machete.

Four officers were dispatched to an apartment on Princeton Street in the East Boston neighborhood at 9:10 p.m. Sunday where two brothers reportedly were fighting, according to officer Michael McCarthy. One of the brothers came out the door of the second-floor apartment brandishing a machete, which police said he swung at them, cutting one of the officers in the knee.

Police said two of the officers fired their guns at the man, and one of them hit him in the left side. He was treated for a non-life-threatening gunshot wound at Massachusetts General Hospital, and faces charges in the case.

The wounded officer also received treatment at the hospital, and was expected to recover. Two



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

other officers also were taken to Mass. General to check for stress-related conditions, police said, and were released.

Bare cleanup

CA SANTA CRUZ — The weekend cleanup of a popular stretch of beach netted the usual garbage: clothing, beer bottles and rusty nails.

What made the effort at Bonny Doon Beach different from cleanups elsewhere on the California coast were the volunteers. Many were nude.

Members of the Bay Area Naturalists club were among those who collected 600 pounds of garbage at one of Northern California's most popular clothing-optional beaches, seven miles north of Santa Cruz.

The effort Saturday was part of the 20th annual California Coastal Cleanup Day, during which volunteers removed 750,000 pounds of trash from 700 locations on the state's shorelines.

Speed auction

NM ALBUQUERQUE — And the race is on! Prospective buyers have less than a month to place a bid on eBay for the Sandia Motor Speedway.

The track was listed on the Internet auction site Friday morning and had received a high bid of \$3,999.19 early Monday. The race track was appraised at \$4.24 million.



Whale of a trip

A cloud of mist and vapor hang in the air as an armada of killer whales surface to breathe while they swim close to shore near Lime Kiln State Park on San Juan Island, Wash.

lion in 2002, said manager Dawn Freeze, one of 52 investor-owners authorizing the sale.

Though no price was listed for the track, the group has the right to pull the speedway off eBay if bids are not high enough, said Anne Apicella, a commercial real estate agent with Grubb & Ellis New Mexico.

The 85-acre race track was developed in the 1990s by a group of investors who also were race enthusiasts.

Drunk (in) driving court

PA READING — A motorist's bail was revoked when police said he had the daring to show up drunk to his preliminary hearing on drunken driving charges.

Emerson Moore Jr., 46, of Caernarvon Township, was awaiting his hearing before Muhlenberg Township District Justice Dean R. Patton when Moore got into an argument with state police Trooper Roberto Soto, officials said.

Soto, who had arrested Moore in the drunken-driving case June 20, smelled alcohol on Moore's breath as the two stood in the hallway outside Patton's courtroom, officials said.

Moore, who had driven himself to court, had a blood-alcohol level of 0.10 percent, police said. The legal limit for driving in Pennsylvania is 0.08 percent.

Meal tax paying off

RI PROVIDENCE — A 1-percent tax on meals and drinks generated \$13.5 million for local governments in the last fiscal year. That's \$3.5 million more than was expected, officials said.

Businesses began collecting the state tax, which goes to the towns and cities where the money is collected, in August 2003.

Restaurants and hotels have generally opposed the tax, fearing it would keep customers away.

River watch

AZ PHOENIX — Interior Secretary Gale Norton signed an agreement with representatives of Arizona, Nevada and California to protect wildlife habitat on the Colorado River and aid native species.

The Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program will create 8,100 acres of riparian, marsh and backwater habitat for about 27 species, six of which are endangered.

The program is designed to protect habitat between Lake Mead and the U.S.-Mexico border while ensuring enough water is available and power operations using Colorado River water can continue. The river supplies water and power to 20 million people in Arizona, Nevada and California.

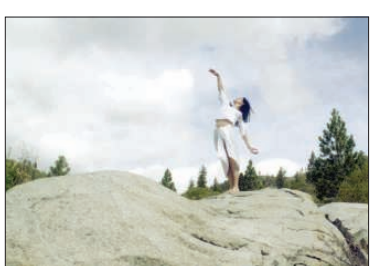
Plymouth police payment

NH PLYMOUTH — Plymouth State University has paid the town of Plymouth more than \$2,500. The town asked for the money to offset the cost of police who helped control a student celebration after the Super Bowl.

Town Administrator Elizabeth Corrow said she found a check from the school in her inbox this week. The payment ends months of contentious talks between the university and town over the university's fair share of the costs.



Chalk it up to kitty Volunteer chalk artist Samantha Morden didn't let her cat, Vincent, get in the way as she helped create a giant chalk drawing in Mission, Kan.



Nature's inspiration Kimberly Pinkson performs a dance atop a cluster of boulders during the Trails and Vistas art walk along the Donner Rim Trail in Truckee, Calif.



My turn! Alex Bajwa, 2, takes a drink from a drinking fountain at Veteran's Memorial Park in Wapakoneta, Ohio, with some help from cousin Alyssa Adkins, 5.



Dusk on the prairie

The evening sun shines through a prairie plant near Douglas, N.D., giving it a ghostly look.



No strings attached

Scouter, a four-month old teacup shiatzu owned by George and Dee Garcia, got a closeup look at the toy animals in the Animal Puppet Theater in El Paso, Texas.



Bear wash

With water flying, Carol Grant washes the bear statue "Goldilocks and the 38 Kind-of-Bears" outside Memorial Hall in Racine, Wis.

Drug arrests at shop

HI KAILUA-KONA — Charges have been filed on the Big Island against eight people arrested at the end of a two-month drug investigation.

Seven other people also arrested Thursday at a wedding shop in the old industrial area of Kailua-Kona were released without charges, pending further investigation.

The probe centered on the shop on Kaiwi Street, where crystal methamphetamine was allegedly being distributed, police said.

Crystal meth, dried marijuana, drug paraphernalia, several firearms and ammunition were seized by police, said Detective Derrick Diego of the West Hawaii Ice Task Force.

Stephen K. Murata, 40, of Holualoa, North Kona, was being held on \$12,500 bail after being charged with three counts of promoting dangerous drugs, three counts of illegal possession of drug paraphernalia and two counts of promoting detrimental drugs, police said.

Dealing dentist

PA EASTON — A dentist was convicted Thursday of buying and selling Ecstasy as part of a major East Coast drug ring.

A Northampton County jury convicted Michael Pacifico, 51, of Bushkill Township, of criminal conspiracy, delivery of a controlled substance and being part of a corrupt organization.

Duane Policelli, an Upper Mount Bethel Township businessman who testified against Pacifico, has already pleaded guilty to running the drug operation, which sold the club drug from Pennsylvania to Florida and was called one of the nation's largest Ecstasy rings.

Boats kill whales' echo

WA TACOMA — Killer whales get the superstar treatment every summer off the Washington coast, where tourists fill up whale-watch boats to catch a glimpse of the majestic animals. Now, researchers are studying whether all the attention could be a bad thing.

University of Washington researcher David Bain, who has studied orcas for 20 years, and other scientists suspect boat noise might interfere with the orcas' echolocation — the way they bounce sounds off objects to monitor their surroundings and find prey.

Bain is part of an international group of government-backed scientists working to learn why the local orca population has dropped to 83 from 98 in 1995.

Canadian scientists have already concluded that the northern resident orcas in British Columbia burn more energy when boats are present, so they must eat more to sustain themselves. If the same holds true for southern residents in Puget Sound, that would affect their survival, Bain said.

Picking up Isabel's tab

NC EDENTON, N.C. — Hurricane Isabel is still causing headaches one year later for residents of this town. Officials are trying to get the Federal Emergency Management Agency to cover about \$400,000 in combined hurricane-related expenses. That includes money for labor costs, use of rescue squad equipment and de-

bris removal.

Isabel caused \$195 million in damages to insured property in Chowan County last September.

Making couples talk

MI LANSING — A law requiring would-be marriage partners to get counseling or wait an extra 25 days to wed is advancing through the Legislature. Counselor couples could wed after three days, while those declining counseling would have to wait 28 days.

Paving the way

AK JUNEAU — The final draft of the state's transportation plan for Southeast Alaska calls for more roadways and shorter ferry rides at a cost of \$1.8 billion over 20 years.

The plan includes a road to connect Juneau to Skagway by 2010 and a highway from Sitka across Baranof Island. However, about 90 percent of those who commented on the plan favored improvements to the Alaska Marine Highway System over road building.

Kids sour on new milk

SC ROCK HILL — Local students aren't too impressed with a new milk that lasts longer and provides more protein than the real thing. They've written letters to the Rock Hill school district and local paper complaining about the taste of the milk, suggesting it's powdery. The milk is 1 percent fat cow's milk boiled to kill bacteria and stored in a sterile sealed box. It has a shelf life of seven months.

Painting pops up

IL DOWNERS GROVE — Volunteers at the Gingham Tree Resale Shop said they were surprised to learn that a yellowed painting left there some time ago may be worth as much \$100,000. Shop supervisor Nancy Shack noticed that the back of the painting bore the signature of Maxfield Parrish, one of the most popular American artists of the early 20th century. The painting was later authenticated as a 1918 original.

Pitching tax breaks

IL SANTA FE — Gov. Bill Richardson will pitch new tax breaks to legislators in January for seniors, low- and middle-income households and single parents. His administration says the state can offer the \$40.5 million tax cut package and still balance its \$4.4 billion budget, the Albuquerque Journal reported. Richardson's initiative comes despite recent estimates that \$101 million more might be needed for Medicaid next year.

Fire out of control

WY RIVERTON — Firefighters on Sunday were close to containing a fire apparently sparked by children that blew out of control and destroyed dozens of vehicles, several outbuildings and tons of hay at a livestock barn.

Nine people, including seven firefighters, suffered minor injuries, officials said. Residents of about 80 homes were allowed to return home Sunday morning after being evacuated.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

FACES

Russian general lends his name

A new product introduced in London brings together two of Russia's most famous exports: vodka and the AK-47 assault rifle.

What ties them together? Both are named after Gen. Mikhail Kalashnikov.

Kalashnikov, 84, who invented the AK-47, was in London on Monday for the official release of Kalashnikov vodka, which is distilled in St. Petersburg, Russia, and imported to England.

The vodka retails for about \$24 for a 22.5-fluid ounce bottle. It is available at several clubs throughout London with a U.S. release planned for next year. "We're marketing this as a premium brand," said Kalashnikov vodka spokeswoman Sophy Geering.

It's the brainchild of entrepreneur John Florey, a graduate of London University, Cambridge University and London's Imperial College.

Florey found the Russian general in the town of Izhevsk in Siberia, where he works as a mechanical engineer at the Izhmash Mechanical Engineering Plant. Kalashnikov agreed to lend his name to the brand and was named honorary chairman of the new vodka company.

Putin honors American pianist

President Vladimir Putin awarded acclaimed U.S. pianist Van Cliburn with an Order of Friendship, and thanked him for dedicating a charity concert to the victims of recent terrorist attacks in Russia.

Cliburn was to play a concert Tuesday in the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory in memory of the more than 330 children and adults killed in the siege of the school in Beslan earlier this month.

"This is a token of recognition of your personal contribution to the Russian-American cultural relations and of your merits in strengthening mutual trust and understanding between our two peoples," Putin told Cliburn on Monday.

Cliburn, 70, accepted the award, saying it showed Russia "has truly recognized and received my deep love and lifetime devotion."

In 1958, at 23, Cliburn won the first Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition held in Moscow, and has since performed around the world.

"Dear President... I am very grateful to you, I love you and Madame Putin. I love the Russian language, I love Russia!" Cliburn told Putin in Russian.

Fans anticipate ketchup ads

What do Mia Hamm, Terry Bradshaw, William Shatner and Lindsay Lohan have in common? The answer: ketchup.

They have signed on with Heinz to "Say Something Ketchupy" on limited-edition bottles of the condiment. The bottles will feature labels with quotes from each celebrity. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of the bottles will benefit charities chosen by each celebrity, the company said recently.

Lohan's take is simple. "Burger-licious," the 18-year-old actress says on the label. Hamm, just back from the Olympic games, says the ketchup is "Worthy as Gold." And former "Star Trek" star Shatner says Heinz "Fixes Burgers at Warp Speed."

Bradshaw, former quarterback for the Pittsburgh Steelers, has a label saying "Served at the Immaculate Reception," a reference to his 1972 pass to Franco Harris.

Berliners line up for art show

An exhibition of masterpieces from New York's Museum of Modern Art closed in Berlin the same way it began seven months ago — packed with enthusiastic visitors and plagued by long lines.

Despite gray skies in the German capital, the line Sunday for the only European stop of the exhibition of 200 paintings — including classics by Vincent van Gogh and Andy Warhol — quickly entered the hundreds, with waiting times topping five hours by noon.

The show opened in February and has attracted some 1.1 million visitors — some 400,000 more than expected. The exhibition has been a boon to Berlin tourism, with about 70 percent of the visitors from out of town.

Since it started, long lines have snaked around the Mies van der Rohe designed Neue Nationalgalerie, with waits sometimes reaching as much as eight hours.

Organizers accommodated the crowds by extending the hours of the exhibition at the start of September, but there was no chance of keeping the show in Berlin any longer — MoMA needs the work's back in time for its Nov. 20 reopening.

From The Associated Press

Life before Jedi

Lucas' little-known directorial debut 'THX 1138' hits movie screens — for the third time

BY DAVID GERMAIN

The Associated Press

SAN RAFAEL, Calif. — In his most soothing voice, George Lucas has these important messages to share: Work hard. Prevent accidents. Increase production. Buy more. And most important, be happy.

Those mantras come from 1971's "THX 1138," Lucas' comparatively unknown first film, which is reintroducing to audiences with a limited stateside theatrical release Friday followed by its DVD debut Tuesday.

In a way, Lucas views this as the true premiere of "THX 1138," a dark sci-fi satire starring Robert Duvall as the title character, struggling to escape a dehumanized society whose inhabitants are mere numbers to a government that preaches boundless consumerism and keeps the population happy through mandatory sedatives.

"It's almost like it's a new movie, because a lot of people don't know about it," Lucas said over lunch at his 2,600-acre Skywalker Ranch. "And I think this time in the way the movie is going, it's much more the kind of release that it should have had in the first place, which is mostly for college students. It's kind of an art film."

In 1971, distributor Warner Bros. did not have a clue about how to handle Lucas' avant-garde flick, so the studio backed a few friends out of it, then dumped the movie into theaters, where few saw it. Warner gave it a rerelease in the late 1970s to take advantage of Lucas' "Star Wars" fame, but "THX 1138" still failed to find an audience.

Most who have seen it caught it on television or videotape in a bad full-screen format that spoils the effect of Lucas' carefully crafted wide-screen images. The new version is a director's cut restoring the footage Warner took out and giving the film a thorough digital restoration.

The two-disc DVD set has terrific background material about "THX 1138" and the era of young Hollywood lions from which it emerged.

The first film from Francis Ford Coppola's American Zoetrope studio, "THX 1138" sneaked into Hollywood during the transition from the old movie-mogul days and the rise of corporate-run studios.

"Easy Rider" had proven there was a viable youth market, but studios had no idea how to exploit it. Without any real understanding of the projects, studios simply began tossing money at promising new filmmakers.

"THX" was as strange then as it is today, and I think if I took this same movie in to anybody today, they would look at me and roll their eyes," Lucas said. "When I did 'American Graffiti' a few years later, they thought that was a far-out movie and that it was too avant-garde to be shown on the screen, so you can imagine what they thought about this one."

Through Coppola's bullheaded persuasiveness, Warner agreed to back Zoetrope, and Lucas was left alone to make the

film he wanted to make. The early communal optimism at Zoetrope, nicely captured in a documentary in the DVD package, was dashed when Warner executives screened "THX 1138" and came out totally befuddled.

After "THX 1138," Lucas knew that if he wanted financial backing, he would have to do something more populist. Coppola challenged him to try a comedy.

"I dare you to do something that's warm and fuzzy," Lucas said Coppola told him. "Why don't you just do a regular funny movie? I bet you can do it." I said, "Well, uh, I think I can do it."

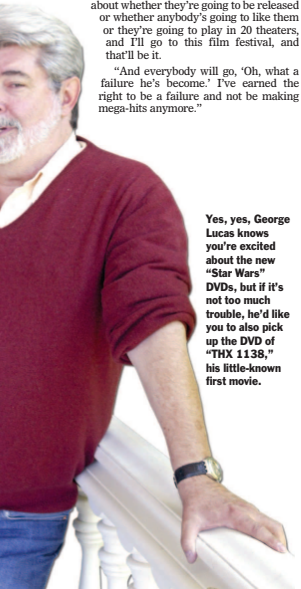
Lucas had an idea for a nostalgic car flick about cruising, which grew into "American Graffiti." The success of that movie gave Lucas the clout to launch one of the most enduring movie franchises ever.

That series concludes next summer with "Star Wars: Episode III — Revenge of the Sith," the last of his six films chronicling the saga of the Skywalker clan.

Once he lays "Star Wars" to rest, Lucas wants to return to the point he was at right after "THX 1138" and make any stories he likes, without regard to their commercial prospects.

"Basically, what I've done is I've set up a situation where I have a fund that I've developed myself that is just for me to do whatever [movie] I want to do," Lucas said. "So now I can go back and do the 'THX's of the world and not worry about whether they're going to be released or whether anybody's going to like them or they're going to play in 20 theaters, and I'll go to this film festival, and that'll be it."

"And everybody will go, 'Oh, what a failure he's become.' I've earned the right to be a failure and not be making mega-hits anymore."



Yes, yes, George Lucas knows you're excited about the new "Star Wars" DVDs, but if it's not too much trouble, he'd like you to also pick up the DVD of "THX 1138," his little-known first movie.



EUROPEAN FORECAST

Benelux: Mostly cloudy with rainshowers and gusty winds. High in the low 60s, Thursday lows in the upper 40s.

Britain, Ireland: Mostly cloudy with isolated rainshowers and gusty winds. High in the low to mid 60s, Thursday lows in the upper 40s to low 50s.

Croatia and Bosnia: Mostly cloudy. High in the low 70s to low 80s, Thursday lows in the upper 40s to mid 50s.

France: Partly cloudy. High in the low 60s to low 80s, Thursday lows in the low 40s to low 60s.

Northern Germany: Mostly cloudy with afternoon rainshowers. High in the low 60s, Thursday lows in the upper 40s.

Southern Germany: Mostly cloudy with afternoon rainshowers. High in the low 60s, Thursday lows in the upper 30s to upper 40s.

Hungary: Partly cloudy. High in the low 70s, Thursday lows in the upper 40s.

Northern Italy: Partly cloudy. High in the upper 70s, Thursday lows in the low 50s.

Southern Italy: Partly cloudy. High in the upper 70s to low 80s, Thursday lows in the low 60s.

Kosovo: Partly to mostly cloudy. High in the low 70s, Thursday lows in the low 50s.

Norway: Cloudy with rainshowers. High in the upper 50s, Thursday lows in the low to upper 40s.

Portugal, Spain: Sunny. High in the low 70s to mid 80s, Thursday lows in the low 60s to mid 70s.

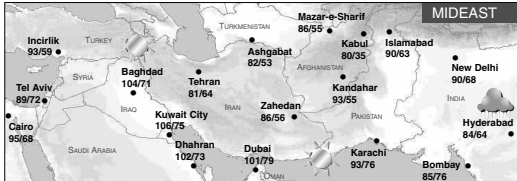
Turkey: Partly cloudy. High in the low 80s to low 90s, Thursday lows in the mid 40s to upper 60s.

KEY: Sun ☀ Partly cloudy ☁ Mostly cloudy ☁☁ Rain ☔ Storm ☌ Fog ☁ Frost ❄ Snow ❄ Cold front ☜ Warm front ☞ Trough ☐ Occluded ☐ Stationary ☐ Low ☐ High ☐

AFRICA					
	HI	LO		HI	LO
Cape Town	78	54	Mogadishu	85	76
Dakar	91	77	Nairobi	80	48
Freetown	84	75	Rabat	90	73

THE WORLD

	HI	LO		HI	LO
Amsterdam	59	48	Manila	88	76
Bahrain	96	81	Mexico City	72	54
Beijing	78	58	Montreal	78	59
Beirut	84	70	Riyadh	101	71
Bermuda	77	65	Rio de Jan	84	76
Caracas	79	61	Seoul	75	53
Helsinki	58	45	Sofia	82	67
Hong Kong	83	74	Sydney	77	58
Lisbon	76	64	Tokyo	84	71



TODAY'S STATESIDE OUTLOOK

HI	LO	OKs		80	57	C	Harrisburg	84	57	C	Nashville	85	57	C	San Angelo	86	65	C		
Albany, N.Y.	57	45	C	Cleveland	50	37	C	Helena	82	55	C	New Orleans	86	61	C	San Antonio	86	61	C	
Anchorage	67	55	C	Colorado Springs	51	36	C	Indianapolis	69	43	P	New York City	84	69	C	San Diego	82	64	C	
Aspen, Colo.	65	45	C	Columbia, S.C.	83	59	C	Houston	88	70	P	North Platte	86	42	R	San Francisco	87	74	C	
Baltimore	71	54	P	Copius, N.Y.	75	52	P	Indianapolis	83	67	P	Norfolk	86	64	C	San Juan	90	70	C	
Birmingham	84	54	C	Dallas-Ft. Worth	87	57	P	Indianapolis	84	57	C	Oklahoma City	86	64	C	Seattle	81	59	C	
Boston	75	54	C	Dayton	83	59	C	Indianapolis	83	67	P	Omaha	85	57	C	St. Louis	72	53	C	
Butte, Mont.	51	44	R	Daytona Beach	84	74	C	Indianapolis	83	67	P	Orlando	85	64	C	Spokane	86	64	C	
Chattanooga	79	53	C	Denver	84	74	C	Indianapolis	83	67	P	Philadelphia	85	64	C	St. Thomas	86	64	C	
Chicago	82	63	P	Des Moines	84	74	C	Indianapolis	83	67	P	Pittsburgh	85	64	C	Tampa	86	64	C	
Cincinnati	84	63	P	Detroit	84	74	C	Indianapolis	83	67	P	Raleigh	85	64	C	Tucson	86	64	C	
Columbus, Ohio	83	59	C	El Paso	84	74	C	Indianapolis	83	67	P	Reno	82	59	C	Waco	86	64	C	
Dallas-Ft. Worth	87	57	P	Fort Smith	84	74	C	Indianapolis	83	67	P	Richmond	87	59	C	Wichita Falls	86	64	C	
Dayton	83	59	C	Fort Worth	84	74	C	Indianapolis	83	67	P	Rio Grande	87	59	C	Wilmington	85	60	C	
Daytona Beach	84	74	C	Grand Rapids	84	74	C	Indianapolis	83	67	P	Salt Lake City	86	64	C					
Denver	84	74	C	Green Bay	84	74	C	Indianapolis	83	67	P									
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El Paso	84	74	C	Hampton	84	74	C	Indianapolis	83	67	P									
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Houston	84	74	C	Indianapolis	84	74	C	Indianapolis	83	67	P									
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Horoscope

The sun makes its annual sojourn into Libra, beginning a cycle of balance, harmony and aesthetic appreciation. Libra is the sign of couples and kinship, and the drive to connect with one special person is heightened now. Choose carefully, though, because once you've teamed up, it's hard to separate.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

SEPTEMBER 22: Your sunny thoughts create a world in which you carry the weather with you — outside forces will not determine your success or failure. It's all within you! The next six weeks bring big luck on the money front. You provide people with excellent products and services and therefore make bank! Singles could marry this year in January.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

You know where you stand, and therefore, you know what you can't stand for. Loved ones and friends who try to persuade you are wasting their time. In the end, they will probably be the ones who have changed their minds.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

You're in a rebellious mood, especially against yourself. The more you try to tame that wild part of you, the more you meet with stubborn resistance. The way to get yourself to toe the line may be to allow for more leeway.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21)

Emotions intensify. At work, you're so passionate about what you're doing, you may unconsciously make moves that will cut someone out. Be careful not to exclude anyone — it's best for your project and for office politics.

CANCER (June 22-July 22)

You owe it to yourself to handle whatever is inhibiting your self-esteem. You're thinking about who the supportive people in your life are and also the ones who aren't so healthy for you. The result is a few concrete decisions.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

Find a tug of war between strong-willed impulses to give you

all and sensible thoughts of taking it slow.

A happy middle ground is possible. Make lists, draw pictures, and think about your goals.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

The stars urge you to speak up about what's bothering you. You'll be surprised how easily people can take your honesty. You'll make career progress when you let others help you get where you want to go.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)

There is not just one approach that will bring desired results. Diversify. Work people want to get to know you on a social level, but think twice before you cross this barrier. If you go, go lightly.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21)

Being in a group for many hours at a time could get on your nerves. You're simply more comfortable in a party of one — two tops. But your team interaction is important now, so be careful about when you withdraw.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Sociability and lighthearted fun is featured, perhaps at the expense of another person. You enjoy a bit of mischief, but do all in your power to be sure that your actions won't be interpreted the wrong way.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

Words have the power to move you to action — and what you say to yourself affects your destiny. Pace yourself — don't let demands run you ragged. If you are diplomatic, you get a job or money someone else missed out on.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Information comes to you in colorful ways, and as a result, you'll have stories to tell at the end of your day. Keep your mental channels focused on the positive — what you want to create and not what you fear.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

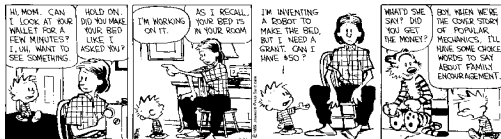
Your heart is filled with levity and good cheer. Staying happy is the classiest way to be. People worth knowing will recognize you for staying upbeat. The workplace has a delicate and complex balance of power.

Creators Syndicate

Joyce Jillion



Calvin and Hobbes



Jump Start



Zits



Cathy



Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



Red and Rover



Better or Worse



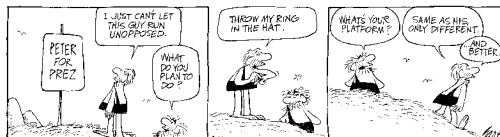
Peanuts



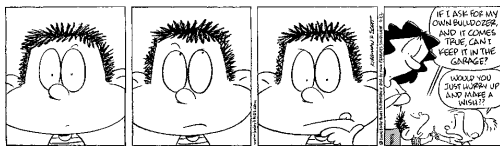
Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



Spider Man



Blondie



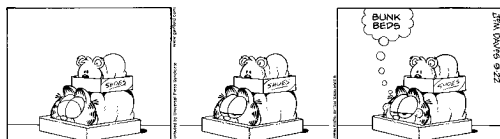
Dilbert



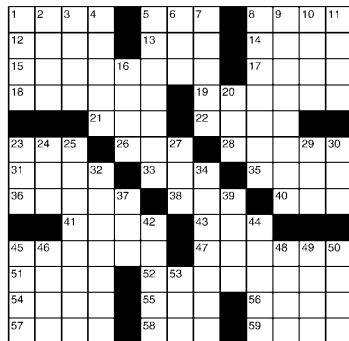
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Tizzy
5 Sermon subject
8 Spirited and aggressive
12 Four-star review
13 Expert
14 Square
15 Winter gear
17 Conan of NYP
18 Walter, in France
19 Soda flavor
21 "Of course"
22 Omelet side dish
23 Ostrich's kin
26 Follow relentlessly
28 Moon goddess
31 Earth
33 Snitch
35 Ignore
36 Car style
38 Orny
40 Chromosome material
41 Pitching stats
43 A billion years
45 January birthstone
47 Unlucky
51 Carnival attraction
52 Opposing current
54 Stench
55 Bush's old org.
56 Actress Sorvino
57 Funny folks
58 Crucial

Down

- 1 Ornamental fastener
2 Kilauwea
3 State with certainty
4 Poet Shelley
5 Angel
6 George's brother
7 Nick
8 It begins "in the beginning"
9 Like a smash in tennis
10 Paraphernalia
11 Siblingless
16 For both sexes
20 Swindled
23 Goller Ernie
24 West of Hollywood
25 Unlikely winner
27 Tie up the phone
29 Habit wearer
30 "The — Daba Honeymoon"
31 They do the hole job
32 Calendar box
37 Dundee denial
39 Info
42 In a jam
44 Standards
45 Expand
46 Operatic
48 Ethiopian
48 Car-related
49 Asta's mistress
50 Mop the decks
53 Never, in Nuremberg

Answer to Previous Puzzle



9-22

CRYPTOQUIP

N NRY YXGY G FAR BCGTG
U P F U A C F N F J W N B A
B N W X A W T N J X Y Z A U G M M A B

"W M G R G F B P C B A C."
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN MANY SCHOOL PUPILS RAISE A HAND AT ONCE, WOULD YOU SAY THEY'RE UP IN ARMS?
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals C

Getting flu shots is important

Dear Abby: Last year, you kindly published a letter from Dr. Deborah Feder of the Immunization Action Coalition highlighting the importance of influenza immunization. Thanks in part to your efforts, record numbers of people were vaccinated early in the 2003-2004 season. Your letter could not have appeared at a better time, because the United States experienced an early flu season and children were severely impacted. By mid-December, 42 influenza-related deaths were reported in children under 18 years of age.

Dear Abby



Children between the ages of 6 months to 23 months remain especially vulnerable to complications from influenza infection. This year, the influenza vaccine is recommended for all children between 6 months and 23 months. Parents, household contacts and caregivers of children between those ages should also be vaccinated.

These children, many of whom are receiving the vaccine for the

first time, may require TWO shots for complete protection. To assure two shots can be given, parents should seek out the vaccine for their infants early.

— Michael Fleming, M.D., President, American Academy of Family Physicians; Carden Johnston, M.D., President, American Academy of Pediatrics; John C. Nelson, M.D., President, American Medical Association

Dear Drs. Fleming, Johnston and Nelson: I'm pleased to help you spread the word. Readers, I am told that influenza kills more than 36,000 people every year, and together with pneumonia is the eighth leading cause of death. It's a tragedy that common myths surrounding the flu vaccine sometimes prevent people from getting it.

Dear Abby: When I was in high school, I was sexually assaulted by a boyfriend of 18 months. It took me many years to forgive

him. However, I don't think I ever forgave myself.

Now that I am in college, I can't bring myself to date. Every time I am asked out, I use any and all excuses I can come up with. It terrifies me that someone will betray my trust again. I have never told anyone about what happened in high school because I thought they would blame me. Please help me — I'm so confused.

— Ashamed and Afraid in Colorado

Dear Ashamed and Afraid: I'm sad to say that rape is one of the most underreported crimes, and for the very reason that stopped you — the victim fears that she (or he) was somehow to blame. The victim is never to blame! The quickest way to start the healing process and move forward with your life would be to arrange to talk to a mental health professional at the student health center. Do not put it off.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at <http://www.uxpress.com/dearabby>. Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

YURLT



CRANH



TUNBOY



GIBNEN



THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

A: THE " " (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: VAPOR CRANK BUCKET IMPOSE
Answer: When clous formed over the open-air theater the actor said — IT'S OVER "CAST"

Mom's fraud put daughter in debt

Dear Annie: I spent five years out of the country, attending school overseas. When I came back, I discovered my mother had fraudulently used two of my credit card accounts while I was away. I don't know how she did it, but both accounts are now closed, and the balances have been forwarded to collection agencies. Mom set up one debt, but I owe \$16,000 on the other one.

Annie's Mailbox



your mother off the hook so quickly, but we do understand that this is a delicate situation for you. Please contact the Identity Theft Resource Center (www.idthc.org), P.O. Box 26833, San Diego, CA 92196, and ask for information and assistance. They will direct you to available resources and best advise you on how to handle Mom's fraudulent behavior.

Dear Annie: I am a freshman in high school, and since the start of the year, I have been picked on in gym class because I cannot complete the mile run. I'm good in other stuff, like chess and video games, and I get good grades, but I'm not a very good athlete. Things really got bad when my P.E. teacher made me stay after school to run laps. The football team was practicing, and so were the cheerleaders, and I could hear them making fun of me.

How can I get people to love

and respect me for who I am? I'm not a bad-looking guy, but I can't imagine any girl will go out with me until I can complete those four laps without stopping.

— Gasping for Air in Louisiana
Dear Gasping: It can be embarrassing to be out of shape in front of the cheerleaders, but there's not much you can do about their rude behavior. What you CAN do is realize that it's in your own best interest to be physically active and fit. Work on those laps, and you'll find yourself getting around the track in no time. Meanwhile, concentrate on the subjects in which you excel. There are plenty of girls who will appreciate a smart guy who gets good grades. Stop worrying so much about the cheerleaders, and check out who's in the library, the chess club, the school paper and the band.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to annie@mailbox.comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

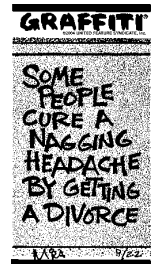
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Family Circus

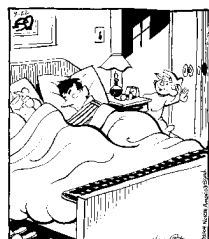


9-22
Globe & Mail, Inc.
The New York Times
www.familycircus.com

"Tell Dolly to stop tryin' to sing songs she doesn't know the words to."



Domis the Menace

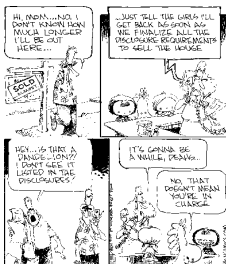


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The Far Side



Non Sequitur



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SCOREBOARD

AFN TV & Radio

Wednesday

AFN-Sports, 1 a.m. - Motorcycle racing: MotoGP 250 from Motegi, Japan (dtd).
AFN-Atlantic, 2 a.m. - Baseball: Minnesota at Chicago White Sox.
AFN-Sports, 2 a.m. - Motorcycle racing: MotoGP 125 from Portugal (dtd).
AFN-Sports, 4 a.m. - Baseball: Los Angeles at San Diego.
AFN-Sports, 5:10 a.m. - Baseball: Seattle at Anaheim (dtd).
AFN-Sports, 1 p.m. - Baseball: Houston at San Francisco.
AFN-Sports, 8:30 a.m. - College football: UAB vs Florida State (dtd).

Thursday

AFN-Sports, 1 a.m. - Baseball: Baltimore at Boston.
AFN-Atlantic, 1 a.m. - Baseball: Chicago Cubs at Pittsburgh.
AFN-Radio, 2 a.m. - Baseball: Oakland at Texas.
AFN-Sports, 1 a.m. - Baseball: Houston at San Francisco.
AFN-Sports, 8 a.m. - NFL football: NFL-Flame of the West (dtd).
AFN-Sports, 9 a.m. - Track and field: IAAF Track & Field Series, from Berlin (dtd).
AFN-Sports, 6:30 p.m. - Baseball: Chicago Cubs at Pittsburgh.
AFN-Sports, 11 p.m. - Boxing: Ballroom Boxing (dtd).

(All times Central European Time; dtd indicates time-delayed broadcast.) All times subject to change. Some radio broadcasts may not be available in all areas. Visit www.mylife.net for more information.

College football

Division I-AA Top 25

PHILADELPHIA (AP) - The top 25 teams in the Sports Network Division I-AA football poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, recross through Sept. 19 and previous rankings:

Record	Pts
1. Southern Illinois (59)	2,250
2. Furman (30)	2,475
3. Georgia Southern (10)	2,313
4. Middle Tennessee	2,169
5. Stephen F. Austin (1)	2,022
6. Western Kentucky (1)	1,925
7. Montana	1,819
8. Maine (2)	1,892
9. North Carolina	1,813
10. Colgate	1,130
11. Middle Tennessee	1,136
12. McNeese State	1,126
13. Northern Iowa	1,127
14. New Hampshire	1,052
15. Cal Poly San Luis Obispo	1,038
16. Massachusetts	1,017
17. Appalachian State	992
18. Northwestern	749
19. Hampton (1)	671
20. Montana State	463
21. Pennsylvania	463
22. Northern Arizona	427
23. James Madison	395
25. Lehigh	317

AP Top 25 schedule

AP #1 Miami at Houston	Friday, Sept. 23
AP #2 Boise State vs. BYU	Friday, Sept. 24
AP #3 Texas vs. Rice	Saturday, Sept. 25
AP #4 Southern Cal at Stanford	Saturday, Sept. 25
AP #5 Virginia vs. James Madison	Saturday, Sept. 25
AP #6 Auburn vs. The Citadel	Saturday, Sept. 25
AP #7 Tennessee vs. Louisiana Tech	Saturday, Sept. 25
AP #8 LSU vs. Syracuse	Saturday, Sept. 25
AP #9 Mississippi State	Saturday, Sept. 25
AP #10 Utah vs. Air Force	Saturday, Sept. 25
AP #11 Purdue at Illinois	Saturday, Sept. 25
AP #12 Kentucky	Saturday, Sept. 25
AP #13 Arkansas vs. Iowa	Saturday, Sept. 25
AP #14 Missouri vs. Northwestern	Saturday, Sept. 25
AP #15 Wisconsin vs. Penn State	Saturday, Sept. 25
AP #16 Arizona State vs. Oregon State	Saturday, Sept. 25
AP #17 Maryland at Duke	Saturday, Sept. 25
AP #18 Louisville at North Carolina	Saturday, Sept. 25

TANK McNAMARA

THESE SPECIALTIES HAVE WIDE-RANGING OFFERS ON HOW LONG ROLLS WILL STAY "RADIOACTIVE."



MARKETING PANEL

Tennis

China Open

Tennis
At the Beijing Tennis Centre
Surface: Hard-Outdoor
Prize: \$500,000 (Tier II)
Round 1
Men's Singles
 Li Na, China, d. Nicole Pietrangeli, Australia, 6-3, 6-2.
 Sandra Matkovic, Croatia, d. Sun Tien Tian, China, 6-4, 6-2.
 Tangtong Tanasugarn, Thailand, d. Jelena Dokic (B), Serbia-Montenegro, 6-3, 6-0.
 Vera Douchkova, Russia, d. Ana Bera, Germany, 2-6, 6-2, 6-3.
 Emmaelie Gagliardi, Switzerland, d. Kristina Brand, Puerto Rico, 2-6, 6-3, 6-3.

Pro soccer

Major League Soccer

Eastern Conference	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Columbus	10	5	10	40	33	29
Colorado	10	10	6	36	42	38
D.C. United	9	9	13	38	38	38
New England	7	11	8	29	44	39
New York	6	11	9	27	38	39

Western Conference	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Kansas City	12	9	8	41	35	29
Los Angeles	10	8	10	38	38	38
San Jose	10	8	10	38	38	38
Seattle	9	10	7	34	38	38
San Diego	9	10	7	34	38	38

NOTE: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

Saturday's games
 MetroStars at Kansas City
 New England at Chicago
 Los Angeles at San Jose
Sunday, Oct. 2
 Chicago at Columbus
 Dallas at New England
 D.C. United at MetroStars
 San Jose at Los Angeles

Pro basketball

NBA playoffs

WESTERN CONFERENCE
First Round (Best-of-five)
Connecticut vs. Washington
Game 1
 Connecticut at Washington
Game 2
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Game 3
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James getting his edge back

Colts RB again looking like dominant rusher of 1999, 2000 seasons

BY MICHAEL MAROT
The Associated Press

Edgerin James scooted through a hole, darted outside, evaded two defenders and outran a handful more in his touchdown run at Tennessee.

It was James at full throttle — quick, powerful, elusive, nearly unstoppable.

Almost three years have passed since James tore the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee, and the Colts believe he is, finally, beginning to look like the runner who won the rushing title in 1999 and 2000.

Now they're hoping a strained hamstring won't put a detour on his trip back to the top.

"He thinks he's fine," Colts coach Tony Dungy said. "But the MRI shows some damage in there. If he had to go today, I would say he's doubtful."

James, as he often does, downplayed the injury after the Colts' 31-17 victory in Nashville and his healing powers may be as amazing as his running skills.

Less than four hours after Dungy said James could miss this week's game against Green Bay and possibly more time, James was running through some light drills Monday and optimistic he would play this week.

"With me things always heal fast," he said. "I might be good to go on play split duty or whatever. I can run and do everything."

If James cannot play this week, the Colts' (-1) will use backup Dominic Rhodes, who replaced James after the knee injury in October 2001.

Rhodes rushed for 1,104 yards — an NFL record for an undrafted



Indianapolis Colts running back Edgerin James won the league rushing title in 1999 and 2000 but suffered a torn ACL in 2001. Sunday's performance in the Colts' 31-17 victory over the Tennessee Titans (21 carries, 124 yards, 2 TDs) suggests that James is regaining his stride.

ed rookie — in the final 10 games that season and said he will spend this week preparing as if he will start even if James makes it back.

"I talked to Edge a little earlier and he said he's hurting a bit," Rhodes said. "If he can't play, I'm ready to go out on a shot."

While the Colts are confident Rhodes can do an adequate carry in training camp. But the youngsters weren't the only ones having problems Sunday.

Tackle Anthony Clement said after the game the line was mixed up.

"We were supposed to be protecting one way and we were protecting it backwards," Clement said. "Things were just happening. As an offensive line, we screwed up."

Green downplayed the possibility the team might make a trade or other personnel moves.

"It's hard to make moves right now," he said. "Always discussions are taking place, but right now my mind-set is that we have to do a lot better with what we have right now."

McCown was 13-for-29 for 117 yards with two interceptions Sunday.

He has yet to throw a touchdown pass. Even when the de-

time since the knee injury.

He's again breaking tackles and running on the edge.

He's catching passes in traffic and taking down blitzers.

The numbers reflect his resurgence: 266 yards rushing and two touchdowns in one of the league's most potent offenses. He finished this week as the NFL's No. 2 runner, 49 yards behind the New York Jets' Curtis Martin and James' average yards per carry have increased significantly. He averaged 3.6 in 2002, 4.1 last year and has shredded two of the AFC's top defensive units for a 5.2 average this year.

The statistics are only one measure of improvement.

James' game-sealing 30-yard TD run Sunday was his second-longest since his surgery and rekindled memories of the player who was one of the most feared runners in his first two NFL seasons.

Last year, James even took the unusual step of trimming his hair after a Cleveland defender tackled him from behind, yanking him down by the trademark dreadlocks that were dangling over his shoulder pads.

This year, James hasn't needed to worry about getting caught from behind.

"He's showed the ability again to bounce outside and run," Dungy

said. "He's making people miss. He's definitely a little notch up from last year."

In 2003, James was good, not spectacular.

He rushed for 1,259 yards and 11 touchdowns, caught 51 passes for another 292 yards and appeared to get stronger as the season wore on. But to keep him healthy, Dungy gave him breaks, even in critical situations.

James doesn't need many breaks these days.

With the Colts needing to rally for a victory at Tennessee, Dungy put the ball in James' hands 11 times in the second half. He ran for 100 yards and two TDs, and the only other player with a second-half carry Sunday was quarterback Peyton Manning, who took a knee to run out the clock.

There's just one concern: fumbles. James put the ball on the ground twice at New England, both inside the red zone, in a 27-24 loss. But James' teammates knew this kind of season was coming. "I've been watching him since he was here for a couple days during summer school," tight end Marcus Pollard said. "He's showed me he's back. He doesn't tell me he's feeling any better, but I can see it in his face and his smile with all those gold teeth."

Marcus Pollard
Colts tight end

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Green looks for ways to rev Cardinals' sputtering offense

BY BOB BAUM
The Associated Press

TEMPE, Ariz. — Dennis Green made his reputation with high-powered offenses. Two games into his tenure as coach at Arizona, the Cardinals are sputtering like an engine with bad spark plugs that's slow on oil.

The winless Cardinals, who play at Atlanta on Sunday, have scored two touchdowns — and 22 points overall — in losses at St. Louis and New England.

"We are going to look at everything," Green said Monday. "There's not one area we won't take a look at."

The obvious areas of concern are the offensive line and quarterback.

Josh McCown was running for his life against the New England pass rush in Sunday's 23-12 loss. When New England blitzed, at least one of the pass rushers came through untouched.

"It's probably miscommunication

for the most part," Green said, "and also application of the system."

He said McCown needs to know when to change the play at the line of scrimmage, based on what he sees the defense doing.

"I think we are not using our audible system as much as we should," Green said. "I personally like teams that blitz against you. It's just part of my makeup, part of the success we've had in San Francisco and Minnesota, when people give you single coverage, or try to blitz, that you hurt people."

He said to remember that this was just the second game of the season.

"That may not be just a young quarterback, but a newness to a system that we have more answers than we are applying right now," Green said.

In addition to having a third-year quarterback who has made just five NFL starts, the Car-

dinals have rookie Alex Stepanovich at center. The team unexpectedly cut veteran Pete Kendall early in training camp. But the youngsters weren't the only ones having problems Sunday.

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"We were supposed to be protecting one way and we were protecting it backwards," Clement said. "Things were just happening. As an offensive line, we screwed up."

Green downplayed the possibility the team might make a trade or other personnel moves.

"It's hard to make moves right now," he said. "Always discussions are taking place, but right now my mind-set is that we have to do a lot better with what we have right now."

McCown was 13-for-29 for 117 yards with two interceptions Sunday.

He has yet to throw a touchdown pass. Even when the de-

fense made plays to give the offense opportunities, the team couldn't move the ball. Neil Rackers' field goals Sunday were from 51 and 52 yards.

But Green cautioned against overreacting to early struggles.

"There are things you can do but you also have to keep in mind you put a lot of work and effort into developing something," he said. "If we are going to find a solution, we will find it. Hopefully, the solution does not require doing things that I would say are along the lines of being desperate. That's not a smart thing."

Green was much less severe in his criticism of the offense Monday than he was immediately after the game, when he questioned the players' intensity and desire.

On Monday, he attributed the struggles to "growing pains and a tough schedule."

Not many teams win in St. Louis, and at least 16 teams before us haven't beaten New England," Green said.



Arizona Cardinals QB Josh McCown (12) is helped up by teammate Larry Fitzgerald after being sacked by the New England Patriots on Sunday in Tempe, Ariz.

Dorsey to start for 49ers at Seattle

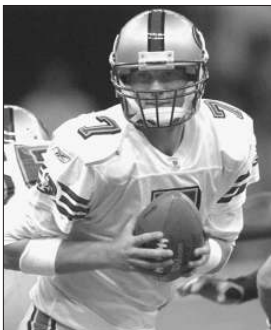
BY GREG BEACHAM
The Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — If Ken Dorsey keeps playing well, he might not be the San Francisco 49ers' backup quarterback much longer.

Dorsey could keep the 49ers' starting job even when Tim Rattay returns from a separated shoulder, coach Dennis Erickson said Monday.

Dorsey made his first NFL start in Sunday's 30-27 loss at New Orleans. He was outstanding after a slow start, going 18 of 32 while leading San Francisco to 370 yards.

The 49ers aren't certain when Rattay, their longtime No. 2 quarterback who got the top job last summer, will return to practice. After getting hurt in the season opener against Atlanta, he was Dorsey's backup on Sunday —



Ken Dorsey, left, made his first NFL start Sunday in place of injured Tim Rattay and completed 18 of 32 passes for 205 yards with one interception in a 30-27 loss at New Orleans. Rattay has a separated shoulder and will not play Sunday at Seattle. AP

but even after getting significant injections of painkillers on the sideline, he didn't think he could throw.

So Dorsey will prepare for Sunday's game at Seattle as the 49ers' starter. If he has another strong game, he might also have a more permanent hold on the job.

"If Tim was healthy this weekend, he'd start," Erickson said. "But as time goes on, we sit and evaluate. ... I don't see how you can make that judgment right now."

Dorsey, a second-year pro who went 38-2 as a starter for the University of Miami, has impressed coaches and teammates while spending most of this summer as the 49ers' top quarterback. Rattay has been slowed by injuries to his groin, forearm and shoulder, leaving Dorsey to practice with the first-team offense.

Though San Francisco games lost all four preseason games and

both regular-season contests so far, Dorsey has shown poise and maturity directing the offense. He's widely considered the Niners' quarterback of the future.

Dorsey doesn't publicly covet the job, however. He is close friends with Rattay, who helped his fellow seventh-round draft pick learn the NFL ropes last season.

"I'm hoping Tim gets healthy as soon as he can, just because I love Tim and he has worked real hard to get where he is," Dorsey said. "I just try to go out and do my job when I have to. I'm a team guy, completely."

Rattay's shoulder is sore and painful, and although he's making progress he won't throw in practice this week.

"My movement is better," Rattay said. "I'm able to do a lot more. We'll have to wait and see for the next couple of days."

The 49ers have much bigger problems than their quarterback situation — but Erickson seemed moderately optimistic about his team despite being one of seven winless clubs after the season's first two weeks.

San Francisco outgained both of its two opponents and played outstanding defense in nearly every situation. The Niners have been outscored by five points in the first two games that were decided in the first seconds.

"I think we showed everybody that we can compete and pretty much dominate two games, especially on the defensive side of the ball," All-Pro linebacker Julian Peterson said.

And only a highly questionable offensive pass interference call against receiver Brandon Lloyd prevented San Francisco from having an excellent chance to tie or beat the Saints. The call, replayed hundreds of times in the 49ers' offices Monday, nullified Terry Jackson's 37-yard reception to the New Orleans 1 with 12 seconds left.

Lloyd and Erickson both thought the incident was too close to call — particularly when the official in question was 25 yards from the play.

"It just looked like he was blocking our receiver," said left tackle Kwame Harris, who's doubtful for Sunday's game after spraining his left ankle. "Maybe there was a home-field advantage, or whatever you want to call it."

Lingering issues turn into titanic problems

Fixing short-yardage offense, pass rush, late meltdowns on Tennessee's to-do list

BY TERESA M. WALKER
The Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — All the talk of payback for being swept by Indianapolis in the AFC South helped the chance to take a big step up in the AFC South? Gone for now.

The Tennessee Titans must confront some issues while preparing for Sunday's game against the division's unlikely leader — the Jacksonville Jaguars.

The Titans suddenly can't even gain a yard or two when needed, and the defense is having trouble reaching the quarterback while giving up 21 points in the fourth quarter.

"It is very unusual and uncharacteristic of us," coach Jeff Fisher said Monday, a day after the Titans (1-1) did just that in a 31-17 loss to Indianapolis. "We had a good plan, and we didn't make any plays."

Coming into this season, the biggest question was if Chris Brown could replace Eddie George, the team's career leading rusher. The early answer is emphatically yes.

Brown has become only the third back in franchise history to rush for at least 100 yards in each of his first two NFL starts. His 252 yards rank third in the NFL and he is averaging 6 yards per carry.

But the speedy, shifty Brown got 152 yards on first or second down on Sunday. On two carries on third down and once on fourth and inches at Indy's 4-yard line, Brown got nothing.

Fisher said backup Antowain Smith didn't have to be used in the short-yardage situation. He also said the Colts were ready for a quarterback sneak by Steve McNair.

"Chris was running the football pretty well. I can't remember when we have had a 150-yard back and not won the football game," Fisher said.

McNair, the AFC's best passer on fourth down in 2003, had an incomplete on a fourth-down attempt Sunday. The Titans finished

ished three of eight on either third or fourth down when needing 2 yards or less, and two of those came in the first quarter.

That left last season's league co-MVP unhappy.

"We expect to go out there and dominate every front line that there is in the National Football League, and that's our expectation, and those are the things that we thrive in," McNair said. "And when you don't get it, yes, it's very frustrating."

One of the NFL's best passing offenses also is struggling.

McNair was the league's top-rated passer in 2003, then the Titans traded Justin McCareins to the New York Jets for a draft pick, expecting Tyrone Calico to fill that slot as a No. 3 receiver.

But Calico missed the first two games after spraining his knees in the third exhibition game, and defensive end Travis LaBoy, the rookie taken with the Jets' draft pick in April, also has yet to play. Calico and receiver Jake Schifano are expected to practice later this week.

McNair didn't get help from his normally dependable receivers.

On a fourth-and-two play in the fourth quarter, Pro Bowler Derrick Mason had a touchdown catch that would've tied the Colts, snatched away by cornerback Nick Harper.

"They would've been great catches, but we have made those catches before," Fisher said. "The defense didn't help either. The Titans allowed 259 yards and 28 points in the second half."

"We kept encouraging each other to make plays and to step up, and all day long we kept waiting and waiting, and it never happened," cornerback Samari Rolle said.

At least the Titans have plenty of experience with slow starts.

They rebounded from a 1-4 record in 2002 to reach the AFC championship game.

"Lo and behold, we will play the Colts again," All-Pro linebacker Kerith Bulluck said.

Indianapolis' defense swarms Tennessee running back Chris Brown during the Colts' 31-17 victory on Sunday. Brown ran for 152 yards, but had zero yards on three carries in short-yardage situations on third and fourth down. The Titans were three of eight on third or fourth down when needing 2 yards or less against Indy. Tennessee has also been outscored 28-3 in the fourth quarter this season.

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With no end in sight to lockout, NHL teams cancel some games

The Associated Press

The Pittsburgh Penguins canceled their home preseason schedule and the regular-season opener on Monday because of the NHL lockout that threatens to wipe out the entire season.

The collective bargaining agreement between the NHL and the players association expired last week. The sides have remained far apart in talks for a new deal, so the league locked out its players when the contract ran out on Sept. 15.

No negotiations are scheduled, and the NHL has threatened to keep players off the ice as long as necessary to achieve "cost certainty" for its clubs.

The NHLPA says that is tantamount to a salary cap, an option it refuses to accept.

The Penguins were supposed to play exhibition games against Washington, Columbus, Boston and Ottawa. The regular home opener was scheduled for Oct. 16.

"Games will continue to be canceled on a similar basis until the league's labor dispute with the NHLPA has been resolved, at which time the league will address the potential rescheduling of games," Penguins President Ken Sawyer said.

The San Jose Sharks canceled their home preseason schedule and the first two regular-season home games on Friday.

NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman told the 30 NHL teams that they can release building dates for games scheduled up to 30 days after Sept. 15, the day the lockout began. That 30-day cancellation peri-

od will be a rolling buffer, meaning games can be canceled each day the lockout continues.

The NHL began laying off its employees on Monday, and said more than 100 members of its central staff of about 225 will have their jobs terminated.

Some NHL players found games to play on Monday when they should have been in training camps. And clearly they could have used the practice.

Edmonton Oilers center Shawn Horcoff spent most of the second period in the safety box, and Henrik Zetterberg and Tomas Holmstrom of the Detroit Red Wings also had tough times with teams in the Swedish Elite League.

Horcoff had no points for Mora, a newcomer in Europe's top hockey league, in its 1-1 tie with favorite Farjestad. Christian Berglund of the Florida Panthers set up Farjestad's tying goal, but failed to score on a breakaway in overtime.

Holmstrom managed one assist for Luilela in a 5-0 victory over Timra.

Seven-time NHL All-Star Peter Forsberg is expected to return Tuesday to his former team, Modo. But unlike most of the other NHL players, Forsberg is expected to play the entire season in Sweden regardless of whether there is a lockout ends.

Also on Monday, Tampa Bay Lightning defenseman Brad Lukowich signed to play with the Fort Worth Brahmas of the Central Hockey League.

The 28-year-old is the first NHL player to sign a contract to play for an independent, nonaffiliated pro team in North America. If the NHL season resumes, he'll rejoin the Lightning.

Danton's alleged accomplice acquitted of murder-for-hire

By Stephanie V. Siek

The Associated Press

EAST ST. LOUIS, Ill. — A young Missouri woman was acquitted Monday of charges she helped former NHL player Mike Danton hire a hit man in a failed plot to kill his agent.

The federal jury deliberated more than three hours before clearing 19-year-old Katie Wolfmeyer in the scheme, which unraveled in April when the man recruited for the hit notified authorities.

Wolfmeyer's family and friends gasped, then applauded and gave Wolfmeyer the

thumbs-up after hearing the verdict on charges of conspiracy and using a telephone across state lines to set up a murder. Wolfmeyer and her mother were spared.

Authorities said Danton and his agent, David Frost, had argued over Danton's alleged promiscuity and alcohol use. Danton, fearing Frost would tell the St. Louis Blues' front office about his behavior, decided to have Frost killed, authorities said.

Danton pleaded guilty to conspiracy charges in July and will be sentenced Oct. 22. He did not testify during Wolfmeyer's trial.

Prosecutors said that Wolfmeyer, of the St. Louis suburb of Florissant, put Danton in touch with acquaintance Justin Levi Jones, and Danton offered him \$10,000 to kill Frost. Jones, a police dispatcher in Columbia, Ill., pretended to accept Danton's offer but instead notified the FBI.

Wolfmeyer testified last week she knew nothing about Danton's bid to have someone killed. "Danton didn't tell me anything," she testified. "I knew nothing. I knew absolutely nothing."

Prosecutor Stephen Clark, however, portrayed Wolfmeyer as a conniving liar and told the jury: "This is no conspiracy against Little Miss Muffet."

mance by increasing the amount of oxygen-transporting red blood cells in his system.

"Tyler told us he did nothing," Luedinger said.

If found guilty of a violation at the Olympics, Hamilton would lose his gold. Three athletes had gold medals revoked for doping during the Aug. 13-29 Games.

"I am 100 percent innocent," Hamilton said.

Former world champion Oscar Camenzind was fired by Phonak and announced his retirement after testing positive for the performance-enhancing substance EPO shortly before the Olympics.

A record 24 athletes — none American — from various sports were cited for drug-test violations at the Athens Olympics.

Asked about Hamilton's reported positive test at the Olympics, IOC medical director Patrick Schamasch said, "For the

moment, I can't confirm or deny anything."

Citing fatigue, Woods drops out of this week's PGA Tour event

FARMINGTON, Pa. — Tiger Woods won't be playing in this week's 84 Lumber Classic.

After much fanfare last week over Woods' decision to play at Nemacolin Woodlands Resort in western Pennsylvania, his agent said Tuesday morning he was worn out from the Ryder Cup.

"He wouldn't be ready to play this week," Mark Steinberg of IMG said from New York, where Woods was doing a media tour to promote his a video game.

Woods and the Americans suffered their worst loss in the Ryder Cup, an 18½-9½ drubbing that enabled Europe to capture the cup for the seventh time in the past 10 biennial events.



Tony Stewart, front, slams into the side of Greg Biffle on Sunday in a wreck that was caused by Robby Gordon during the Sylvania 300 at New Hampshire International Speedway. Stewart and Jeremy Mayfield, both among the 10 drivers in the race for the points title, suffered poor finishes that will likely eliminate them from Nextel Cup contention.

R. Gordon apologizes for triggering wreck

The Associated Press

WELCOM, N.C. — Robby Gordon apologized Monday for intentionally causing an accident at New Hampshire International Speedway that involved championship contenders Tony Stewart

and Jeremy Mayfield.

Gordon was angered 17 laps into Sunday's race when Greg Biffle

caused him to spin. After radioing to his crew that he would retaliate, he made good on the threat by intentionally wrecking Biffle later in the race.

Stewart and Mayfield could not avoid the accident, and their cars were severely damaged. Mayfield finished 35th, Stewart was 39th, and neither will likely be able to overcome their point deficits in the last nine races of NASCAR's play-off system.

"First and foremost, I feel terrible for Jeremy Mayfield, Tony Stewart, their teams, sponsors and car owners Joe Gibbs and Ray Evernham," Gordon said. "I allowed my frustration with [Biffle] to affect two other teams, both of which have great shots to win a championship, and for that I am sorry."

Gordon admitted when he wrecked Biffle he was "trying to even the score."

He also apologized for an on-scene gesture he made after the race as reporters tried to interview him. Gordon said the gesture was directed at one reporter.

"That too, was poor judgment and, in hindsight, I should have just walked away," he said. "So I also apologize to any media members and bystanders I offended. It was a bad day that just seemed to get worse and worse."

It also could ultimately cost Gordon his job with Richard Childress Racing. His security as driver of the No. 31 Chevrolet was already shaky, and Sunday's actions might lead to his dismissal.

Robby Gordon

Nextel Cup driver

don his job with Richard Childress Racing. His security as driver of the No. 31 Chevrolet was already shaky, and Sunday's actions might lead to his dismissal.

U.S. Olympic cycling champion Hamilton denies doping

The Associated Press

REGENSDORF, Switzerland — Olympic time-trial champion Tyler Hamilton declared his innocence Tuesday after his pro cycling team said he's being investigated for possible blood doping and could be stripped of his gold medal.

Hamilton said he would "fight this until I don't have a euro left in my pocket."

Tests at the Athens Olympics on Aug. 19 and at the Spanish Vuelta on Sept. 18 showed evidence of blood from another person, cycling's governing body said, according to a spokesman for Hamilton's team, Phonak. Follow-up tests were scheduled for later Tuesday.

Phonak spokesman Georges Luedinger said Hamilton denied having a transfusion — which can boost an athlete's perfor-

Players in Japan League back to work

TOKYO — Baseball returned to Japan after all weekend games were wiped out by the first players' strike in the sport's 70-year history in the country.

All 12 games Saturday and Sunday were called off, leading to losses for teams estimated to be about \$17 million.

Players want owners to scrap a planned merger of Pacific League teams Orix and Kintetsu. The strike could continue to affect weekend games for the rest of the season, but weekday games will be played.

Alabama QB Croyle out for season BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Alabama quarterback Brodie Croyle had reconstructive surgery on his right knee Monday.

Croyle tore the anterior cruciate ligament during Saturday's 52-0 victory over Western Carolina. He is out for the season.

Marc Guillon, a transfer from Miami, will start Saturday at Arkansas.

Sports
briefs

Party can begin for Cardinals

Title celebration put on hold until win over Brewers

The Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — The St. Louis Cardinals broke out the champagne and sprayed their way around a raucous clubhouse, celebrating their NL Central championship.

Two days after they clinched it, Albert Pujols' go-ahead single keyed a three-run ninth inning, and the Cardinals beat the Milwaukee Brewers 7-4 Monday night for their major league-leading 98th victory.

Under baseball's tiebreaker rules, St. Louis ensured its third division title in five seasons on Saturday when the Cardinals beat Arizona 7-0, and San Francisco and the Chicago Cubs both lost.

But manager Tony La Russa refused to acknowledge that his team had already won the crown, both before and after Sunday's 3-2 loss to Arizona.

La Russa wanted to clinch it on the field. He stormed out of his postgame news conference angrily responding to a question about delaying the traditional champagne celebration.

So the bubbly just sat, chilling for two extra days — until the Cardinals let loose Monday night.

"The only thing that made this thing better was to do it yesterday at Busch Stadium," a drenched La Russa said, standing in front of lockers shielded by floor-to-ceiling plastic. "That's why we were disappointed, because we cared. But this is a great moment."

The Cardinals came to Milwaukee ready to party.

They packed up more than 20 cases of champagne and boxes of championship hats and T-shirts



St. Louis Cardinals pitcher Steve Kline sprays champagne after the NL Central champions' victory over the Brewers on Monday in Milwaukee.

and had the team's clubhouse attendants drive it all up to Miller Park in two pickup trucks that arrived 45 minutes before Monday's game.

After Trent Durrington made the final out, the Cardinals rushed out of their dugout and lined up to congratulate each other.

La Russa stood at the end of the line and hugged the players before they ducked into the tunnel to the clubhouse and the waiting tubs of champagne and beer.

"In a division as tough as ours, this has great meaning for us," La Russa said. "We worked hard to get to this."

St. Louis capitalized on Luis Vizcaino's wildness to tie it 4-4 in the eighth, then went ahead with three runs in the ninth for its 44th comeback win.

Dan Kolb (6-4) gave up a single to Tony Womack in the ninth and a walk to So Taguchi before Pujols lined a single to center to drive in Womack. One out later, Roger Cedeno drove in Taguchi with an infield single, and Edgar Renteria knocked in Pujols with a single, chasing Kolb.

Julian Tavarez (7-4) got the final out in the eighth for the win.

Jason Irsinghausen pitched a perfect ninth in his 43rd save in 50 chances.

Cubs 5-2, Marlins 1-5: David Weathers made sure the Chicago Cubs' stay on top of the National League wild-card standings was brief.

The journeyman right-hander, making his first start in six years, limited Chicago to two hits and one run in five innings, and Florida earned a split of the doubleheader.

Mark Prior allowed just five hits in 7 1/3 innings and outpitched Carl Pavano (17-7) as Chicago won the opener and climbed one percentage point ahead of San Francisco in the wild-card race. But the Cubs ended the day where they started: a half-game behind the idle Giants.

The Marlins remained 4 1/2 games behind San Francisco.

In the first game, Corey Patterson's two-run double put the Cubs ahead to stay, and Prior (6-4) allowed one run in the first. He threw a season-high 129 pitches.

In the second game, Damon Easley hit three-run shot off Matt Clement (9-13). Michael Barrett hit his 16th home run for the Cubs.

Top-flight starters, deep bullpen key to winning in October

Some baseball teams are built for the long grind of the season, some for a short playoff series.

The teams with the two best records, the St. Louis Cardinals and New York Yankees, have all the talent to win 100 games or more.

Steve Wilstein

A great balance of offense, defense and pitching, tremendous depth, stars who can dominate, leadership on the field and in the dugout. Yet it's a good bet they won't face each other in the World Series.

One or the other, if not both, may fall along the way to teams that have pitchers who can carry them through the best-of-five first round of the playoffs and best-of-seven league championship series.

The Cardinals are more vulnerable to an early exit. They have five decent starters, but no true ace. Chris Carpenter, who may miss his next start with a strained right biceps, comes closest to filling that role. Matt Morris once did, but he's been erratic, a Jekyll-and-Hyde pitcher who can throw a two-hitter or get run off the mound early. Closer Jason Irsinghausen has been good, not invincible.

In a five-game series, teams need an ace who can win games 1, 5 and 6, and somebody else who can carry them to another victory. In a seven-game series, they need at least two aces who can give them a shot at winning four games by themselves. In both series, they need bullpens that will choke off rallies and protect slim leads.

That's primarily what made the Florida Marlins the World Series champs last year. They didn't have all the ingredients to rule in the regular season, but once they secured the wild-card berth they had enough talent to win short series, where star pitching takes on a greater importance.

The Cardinals, though, are not alone in missing a dominant starting staff. "Everybody's pitching in baseball is suspect," Harold Reynolds, ESPN's baseball analyst and a former major league star, said.

"If there's one team in the National League that I can say, 'Look out for their pitching,' it would be the Chicago Cubs. If they get hot at the right time, they can ride those guys all the way to the World Series."

The Cubs would have to win the wild card first. But if they do and have a healthy Mark Prior and Kerry Wood, they could well beat St. Louis if they meet for the league championship. Prior allowed five hits in 7 1/3 innings Mon-

day to beat Florida 5-1 in the first game of a doubleheader split that left the Cubs a half-game behind San Francisco and a half-game ahead of Houston.

The Cubs' starting pitchers are tied with the Braves for the NL's lowest ERA in September at 3.49 after Monday's games and the Cardinals were next at 3.51, followed by the Giants at 3.59 and the Astros at 3.80.

Houston should be a serious threat in the playoffs, if starter Roy Oswalt is healthy and can complement the always tough and seemingly ageless Roger Clemens.

The Los Angeles Dodgers, meanwhile, are near the bottom in starting pitching at 4.07, their 6.27 ERA ahead of only Cincinnati.

Momentum matters going into October, especially on the mound.

The Boston Red Sox, whose long-suffering history is similar to the Cubs', know that better than most teams.

Blown out by the New York Yankees in the last two games of their series over the weekend, the Red Sox are a long shot to win their division. But with a big lead in the wild-card race, they will be dangerous in the playoffs with Curt Schilling and Pedro Martinez leading the way, even if the rest of the team is rusty.

"That's the No. 1 team I think about in the AL," Reynolds said. "Other than that, it's roll the dice with the pitching."

Minnesota, a team that baseball observers have deemed a longshot to win — in large part because of ace Johan Santana, who won his 11th straight start Sunday. Santana (19-6) is complemented by Brad Radke and has helped the Twins maintain the best starting pitching this month — a 2.29 ERA and 11-4 record.

Going the other way are the banged-up Oakland Athletics, whose starting staff has a 5.95 ERA in September.

The Yankees' pitching has turned around after a miserable August, in which the starters had a 5.15 ERA and a 9-10 record.

This month the Yankees' starters, led by Mike Mussina and Orlando Hernandez, have a 3.29 ERA and a 10-3 record. If they can keep that up and if Kevin Brown returns from a broken left hand and finds his rhythm quickly, the Yankees might be unbeatable.

"It's hard to count the Yankees out," Reynolds said. "They showed everybody this weekend what they're made of. They know how to win."

Steve Wilstein is a national sports columnist for The Associated Press. Write to him at: swilstein@ap.org

EDUCATION FOCUS

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STARS AND STRIPES

Low-budget Twins extend penthouse stay

Team once slated for contraction wins AL Central for third straight year

By NANCY ARMOUR

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Brad Radke stood in a corner of the Minnesota Twins' clubhouse, spraying beer on anyone he could get. Torii Hunter could only grin as two teammates threw a cooler full of cold water on him. Manager Ron Gardenhire laughed when several players poured beer down his back.

And Jacque Jones walked around the room, smiling as he took it all in.

"This," Jones said, "is what it's all about."

The Twins clinched their third straight AL Central title Monday night with an 8-2 victory over the Chicago White Sox. Threatened with contraction, forced by economics to replace more than half of their team, written off as little more than a Triple-A team — none of it seems to matter. Minnesota just finds a way to keep on winning, making the playoffs for three straight seasons for the first time in its 44-year history.

"Three times!" Hunter screamed. "How about that?"

If ever there was a year for someone else to win the division, this was it. The Twins lost Eddie Guardado, LaTroy Hawkins, A.J. Pierzynski, Eric Milton, Dustin Mohr, Denny Hocking and Kenny Rogers in the offseason, and traded Doug Mientkiewicz in July.

Yet it was the Twins partying Monday while the White Sox, the preseason favorites, trudged gloomily into their clubhouse.

"They are a better team," Paul Konerko said. "They have proven that the last three years. No question."

They know how to celebrate, too.

The game was all but over after the first inning, when Hunter and Corey Koskie hit two-run homers



Minnesota Twins' Corey Koskie, right, celebrates with Michael Cuddyer after hitting a two-run home run against the White Sox on Monday in Chicago. The Twins clinched the AL Central title with an 8-2 victory.

off Mark Buehrle. The Twins hung over the railing in front of their dugout for the final inning, and Ron Gardenhire inserted Jones, one of the few players left over from the team that was threatened with contraction, as a defensive replacement so the veteran could be on the field.

When Timo Perez popped out to shortstop Cristian Guzman for the final out, the Twins rushed onto the field for a group hug at second base. After hopping around for several minutes, the Twins walked toward the dugout to exchange handshakes, hugs

and high-fives with the coaching staff.

After congratulating each of his players, Gardenhire turned around to salute the Twins fans who stood behind the dugout, cheering and clapping.

"That was beautiful," Gardenhire said, his shirt drenched with champagne. "One [title] doesn't mean more than the others. They're all great. It means everything in the world."

Especially when so many people had counted them out.

The Twins had a clubhouse full of new faces when they arrived at

spring training, and no one — even the players — was quite sure what to make of the team. Just when they seemed to get things figured out, they were hit by a rash of injuries.

Kansas City had upgraded its roster, and Chicago was stocked with pitching and hitting. Surely, one of those teams would end Minnesota's run.

"We quit worrying about the White Sox, the Tigers, the Indians," Gardenhire said. "We just play our game."

And that game was good enough to beat everyone else. The White Sox led the division

as recently as July 24, but the Twins had moved a half-game in front by the time they arrived in Chicago two days later. They won their first game to extend their lead, and then delivered the knockout blow in the second game.

Late in the game, Hunter bawled over Chicago catcher Jamie Burke at the plate with a hard shoulder block. The hit not only left Burke sore, it bruised the White Sox's psyche so badly they never recovered. They lost seven straight, and 11 of 13. By Aug. 7, the Twins had a seven-game lead and the White Sox were in third place.

Minnesota is 41-22 since the All-Star break, and has won 11 of 13. The White Sox are 13½ games back and were officially eliminated Monday.

"Look at all the injuries we had and look at all the guys who came up and filled those roles. They did a great job," Koskie said. "That's what happens. Players are going to get hurt. Young guys did a great job doing their jobs."

One of those was Carlos Silva (13-8), who scattered seven hits and two runs over seven innings to win his third straight start.

Mark Buehrle (14-10) got hit hard in losing his second straight start, both to the Twins. He gave up seven runs, four of them homers, and 10 hits in six innings. He's allowed a career-high 32 home runs this season.

Buehrle also walked three and struck out three.

"Hopefully we can look at [them clinching] and come back with a bigger heart and win next year," Buehrle said. "The Twins will likely have something to say about that. First, though, there's the playoffs."

"You work your butts off in spring training and throughout the year season to get to this point," Radke said. "But it's not over. We just had to finish the year strong and play good in the first round."

Angels gain on A's despite scary moment for Guerrero

The Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Dallas McPherson saved the ball and lineup card to go with the memories he'll have of his three hits and an RBI in his first major league start.

McPherson's offense helped the Anaheim Angels gain ground in the playoff race with a 5-2 victory over the Seattle Mariners on Monday night.

"It was a great experience. I couldn't ask for anything better," he said. "It gives me a lot of confidence knowing they have confidence in me."

The Angels closed within 2½ games of idle Oakland in the AL West and 4½ of Boston in the wild-card chase despite playing most of the night without their star right fielder Vladimir Guerrero, who was hit in the head by a pitch in the first inning.

X-rays at a hospital were normal, and Guerrero returned to the dugout during the game.

"I don't think it was intentional. With two strikes, you're not going to do that," Guerrero said, referring to Ryan Franklin. "I feel good. I only feel sore where the ball hit me."

Seattle's Ichiro Suzuki went 2-for-4 with a walk. His two singles gave him a major league-leading 238 hits this season. 19 short of George Sisler's major league record set in 1920. The Mariners have 12 games remaining.

Winning pitcher John Lackey (13-12) gave up two runs and 10 hits in six innings, striking out seven and walking none. Troy Percival pitched a scoreless ninth as his 29th save in 34 chances.

"When your best player gets hit in the head, you're going to have guys upset, but I don't believe there was intent," Percival said.

AL Roundup

Angels second baseman Adam Kennedy left the game after spraining his right knee in the fifth on a fielding play. He will undergo an MRI on Tuesday.

"It tightened up on me pretty good," he said.

Guerrero left after he was hit on the left side of his head by a pitch from Franklin (4-16). Anaheim manager Mike Scioscia was ejected for the fourth time this season after yelling and pointing at Franklin.

"You sure hope a pitch like that is not intentional," Scioscia said, adding that the umpires told him there was a report filed recently about bad blood between the teams involving Guerrero.

"My contention was that Frank-

lin should have been ejected if the umpires were aware of some prior knowledge of some bad blood. That's what I was upset with Franklin about. I told Franklin if you're going to pitch inside, you've got to pitch inside responsibly, but it was behind his head. It was disturbing."

Seattle's bench emptied, but no punches were thrown. Both benches were warned.

Orioles 9, Red Sox 6: B.J. Surhoff hit a grand slam as visiting Baltimore capitalized on the third straight poor start by a Red Sox pitcher.

Tim Lincecum (11-10) lost his control after three strong innings and fell to 0-3 in four starts. Boston failed to take advantage of the Yankees' loss to Toronto and remained 4½ games behind the AL East leaders. The Red Sox lost 14-4 on Saturday in New York and 11-1 on Sunday.

Blue Jays 6, Yankees 3: At New York, Gustavo Chacin became the first lefty starter to win his major league debut against the Yankees in the Joe Torre era.

Chacin (1-0) allowed a mere four hits before leaving in the eighth inning. Javier Vazquez (14-10) got his 23rd save.

Shane Bieber and Carl Crawford homered for Tampa Bay, which has lost 17 of 21.

Tigers 3, Indians 1: Mike Maroth (11-11) pitched shutout ball into the seventh, and Dmitri Young and Brandon Inge homered for the Tigers in Detroit.

SPORTS



Lockout already costing teams some games, league employees their jobs, Page 28

Eagles duo wins duel

McNabb, Owens outplay Vikings' Culpepper, Moss

BY ROB MAADDI
The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Donovan McNabb moonwalked, Terrell Owens slam-dunked and the Philadelphia Eagles' defense kept Daunte Culpepper and Randy Moss from strutting their best stuff.

McNabb threw a touchdown pass to Owens and ran for another score, leading the Eagles over the Minnesota Vikings 27-16 Monday night.

The Vikings hogged the ball for nearly 38 minutes, but were hurt by miscues and crucial penalties.

"Our defense did an excellent job keeping them out of the end zone," McNabb said. "When we had our opportunities, we took full advantage by putting points on the board."

Though the teams combined for 727 yards and only punted twice, this wasn't the offensive shootout many expected. McNabb outplayed Culpepper, who hurt his team badly with a fumble inside the Philadelphia 1.

"I thought the ball might have crossed the plane," Culpepper said. "I thought my body was in there."

The Eagles' 2-0 start at home is a switch from last season, when they lost the first two games at their new stadium.

"A lot of us learned from the mistakes of last year, and the experience of being in that position helped us a lot and how we got out of that hole," McNabb said.

The Vikings (1-1) have lost 17 of their past 18 outdoor regular-season games. They might have stayed unbeaten if Culpepper and Moss connected more when the game counted. Minnesota gained 410 yards, but got only one touchdown. Moss' 4-yarder late in the game.

"I kept coming to the sideline telling Coach, 'I see fear in their eyes. Let's keep attacking,'" Moss said. "I think I was more frustrated because we kept driving, driving, driving. We put yards on the scoreboard, but we didn't put up the points."

Moss finished with eight catches for 69 yards, while Owens had four receptions for 79 yards, including a 45-yard TD that put the game out of reach.

"They can say he's the best, but I'm the best for the Eagles," Owens said of Moss, who sparked a verbal war between the quarterbacks last week.

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Vikings cornerback Antoine Winfield is on the turf as Eagles receiver Terrell Owens pulls in a 45-yard touchdown pass in the fourth quarter on Monday night. The score sealed Philadelphia's 27-16 victory.



Twins celebrate
third straight
AL Central title

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Injury news
not good
for Saints
RB McAllister
or Steelers
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Robby Gordon apologizes for wrecking Stewart, Mayfield

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